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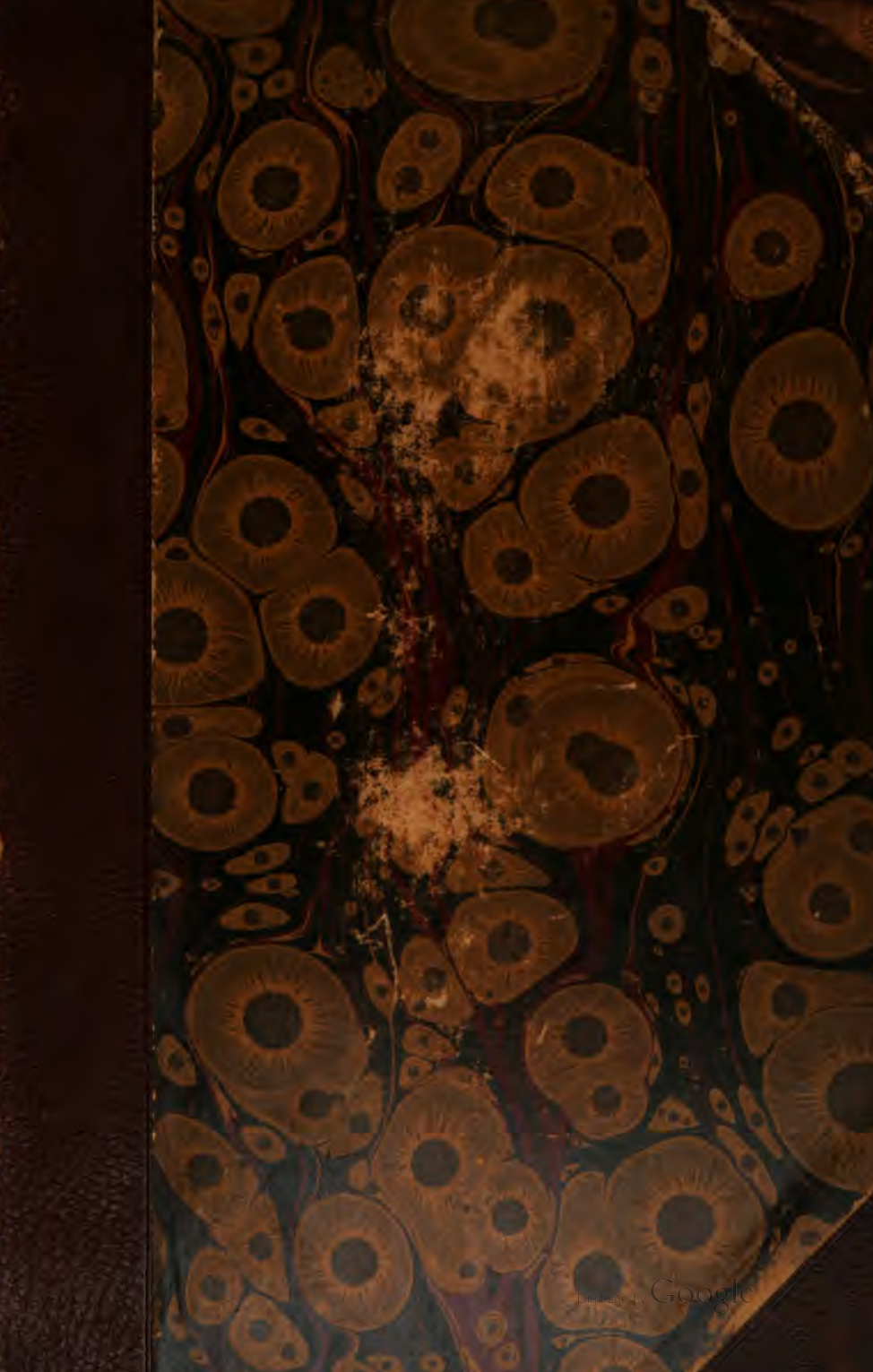
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1855

Sir Peter Benson Maxwell.

WHOM SHALL WE HANG?

THE

SEBASTOPOL INQUIRY.

"It often falls out, that somewhat is produced of nothing; for lies are sufficient to breed opinion, and opinion brings on substance."

LORD BACON.

LONDON:
JAMES RIDGWAY, PICCADILLY.
1855.

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THE SEBASTOPOL INQUIRY.

I.

THE DEBATE.

In the spring of 1854, England and France sent an expedition into the East, for the double purpose of protecting Turkey and of compelling Russia to abandon pretensions which natural justice and the true policy of the Western Powers alike condemned. In this country, even more than among our allies, the war was highly popular. The nation which the rest of the world regarded as wholly absorbed in the sordid pursuit of wealth, was more clamorous for the fray than the people who are commonly considered as pre-eminently martial. Certainly, whatever might be the claims of commerce and of the arts of peace upon us, they were forgotten in the dreams of military glory, and in the indignation at oppression which swelled the popular cry to arms; and the few voices that were raised to give warning of the sufferings which the victors must share with the vanquished, were unheard or disregarded. As is usual at the commencement of wars, people refused to trouble their visions of victories with calculations of the price at which they must be purchased. They did not trouble themselves with a thought of the life and treasure which they would have

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to pay for the object which they desired to attain. A generation which had never smelt gunpowder was especially unlikely, when it proposed to give itself the gratification of humbling an enemy, to count the cost of such a luxury; and it did not hesitate to attribute to pusillanimity, and even to treachery, the earnest efforts of its best statesmen to avert the resort to the *ultima ratio regum*. Those efforts, however, proved unavailing. War was declared. Fleets were despatched to the Black and Baltic seas. An army was collected and sent to the East, and in one short campaign, not only had the soil of an ally been cleared of its invaders, but fire and sword had been carried into that of the enemy. His commerce had been crippled. One of his most important towns had been bombarded. One of his fortresses had been rased to the ground; and another, perhaps the most formidable in his empire, was threatened with destruction.

These events might have been expected to give the nation matter for pleasant reflection and self-gratulation. It was no bad beginning, it might have been thought; and the Administration which had been vilified for its peace-policy, might have hoped to obtain some little credit for its vigour in war. But such was not the tone of public feeling. The nation took to grumbling from the very outset. Impatience to meet the Russians led, in the spring, to clamours for a march to the Danube, and when the only foe whom the army would have met there—

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the Cholera—appeared in their ranks at Varna, fresh complaints arose. The news of the invasion of the Crimea and of the battle of the Alma restored good humour, indeed, for a short time, and the false report of the fall of Sebastopol raised the public spirits to the highest degree. But the arrival of the sober truth that the Russian town held out, was the signal of discontent. Rumours began to spring up that the Government had neglected to send lint and linen for dressing the wounds of our soldiers; that the military hospitals were in a scandalous state of disorganization, filth, and destitution; and that the medical officers of the army had been neglectful of the wants of the sick, and indifferent to their well-being. As time wore on, the reports from the seat of war grew more and more gloomy. The bombardment of Sebastopol on the 17th October failed to compel the surrender of the place. The light cavalry fell a heroic sacrifice to a blunder on the 25th; and the sortie of the 26th, and the terrible engagement of the 5th of November, proved that the Russians were not to be "crumpled up" as soon as we had expected.

It became clear that our army must pass the winter on the heights above the town; and this prospect, as little answering the expectations of people at home as promising comfort to the men on the plateau, increased the growing dissatisfaction. Such was the state of the public temper, when news began to arrive in England, that our men were

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delivered over to famine, cold, and disease, and that the army which had escaped with comparatively little injury the perils of the battle-field, was threatened with annihilation from the neglect and incapacity of its chiefs abroad, and the Government at home. Details "horrible and heart-rending" were not wanting; and in the midst of much that was unquestionably true, tales not only unfounded in fact, but preposterously absurd on their very face, found wide circulation and ready acceptance among the multitude. Not only were our cavalry horses left unfed, but the poor brutes, it was said, vying with the carnivorous steeds of the Thracian Diomedes, devoured each other's tails and manes, in the pangs of hunger. Such scanty rations of salt pork as our soldiers occasionally got, they were compelled to eat raw. Any coats which they received, were delivered without buttons; and they were driven by necessity to exchange their British rags for the French uniform. Huts had been sent to them, but the nails for putting them together had been forgotten. The scanty supply of medicines which had been forwarded to the seat of war had been so packed as to be inaccessible at their destination; and as for medical comforts, if any had been ordered, they were lying either forgotten in some warehouse in Portsmouth, or buried in stores at Scutari, which Routine locked up, and Miss Nightingale broke open. One day it was reported that the shells supplied by the Ordnance were too small for the bores of the

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mortars. On the next, the rumour was inverted, and it was announced that the bores were too small for the shells, and that our over-worked men were obliged to file these down to the requisite size. In short, "canards," but too often of home hatching, and "shaves" from the camp, swelled and disfigured the simple tale of the hardships and privations really endured by our army, and while they almost tempted dispassionate and reasonable men to smile in the presence of terrible suffering, they were greedily swallowed by the omnivorous *gobemouches* who abound in our happy land. The first step on this, as on all similar occasions of popular excitement, was, not to seek a remedy, but to demand a victim. The question was not, how shall we cure existing evils, but whom shall we hang for past errors, real and imaginary?

The House of Commons represents too faithfully the state of public opinion not to find within its walls an echo of the prevailing sentiments of the day; and it needed not the gift of prophecy to anticipate that on the meeting of Parliament in January, somebody would be found prepared to give expression, in one shape or another, to the general discontent. This task was undertaken by Mr. Roebuck, who announced, on the meeting of Parliament, his intention to move for "a select com-
"mittee to inquire into the condition of the army
"before Sebastopol, and into the conduct of those
"departments of the government whose duty it had
"been to minister to the wants of that army."

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Mr. Roebuck's case against Lord Aberdeen's Government was very simple. What is the condition of the army before Sebastopol, and how has that condition been brought about? The army was, "without shelter, without clothes, without food, and without ammunition;" and that condition had been brought about by "the incapacity of those whose duty it was to minister to its wants." Of the 54,000 men who had, but a few months before, been sent forth from the shores of this country, not more than 14,000 were actually under arms before Sebastopol; and of those, less than 5000 were uninjured in health. Thus, 40,000 had already disappeared; and the remainder had but a couple of months allowed them before following their comrades. This fearful result was, of course, the consequence of "incapacity at home, and incapacity abroad." * Such was the sum and substance of this famous indictment; and it lacked not many ready believers. Other members, indeed, supported their vote for an inquiry upon different grounds. According to Mr. Drummond, the omission to send a waggon train with the army to Varna, and the purchase of Minié rifles at Liege instead of Birmingham, to say nothing of strategetical objections to the Crimean Expedition itself, justified the overthrow of the Ministry. Mr. Layard's want of confidence in them, rested partly on the want of horses at Varna, the want of siege guns, the want of ammunition, the want, in short, of every necessary equipment, but still more

* Roebuck, H. of Com. Jan. 26.

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on the neglect of the many valuable suggestions which, according to the Duke of Newcastle, he had never offered.* Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton saw the incapacity of the Administration, in their neglect to occupy Odessa, and in their exposure of our army to the "pestilential" climate of the south of the Crimea. Mr. Stafford discovered their incompetence in the unpleasant details of hospital privies. Mr. Walpole thought that the interests of the Government, and the character of the Commander-in-Chief alike required that the proposed inquiry should take place, but he failed to point out how the latter could obtain justice from a tribunal which would receive accusations against him behind his back, and leave him without the means of defending himself against them. Mr. Henley condemned the Administration for their self-sufficiency, and Mr. Disraeli naturally availed himself of a favourable opportunity for attacking the conduct of those who sat on the Treasury benches.

On the other side, the existence of much privation and hardship in the camp, and of a considerable mortality in consequence, was not denied, although Mr. Roebuck's figures were corrected by shewing that at least 28,000 men were still under arms at the siege. It was frankly and with sorrow admitted by Mr. S. Herbert that "exposure to suffering, exposure to an inclement climate, and privations of all descriptions had reduced the army under the command of

* The Duke of Newcastle, Q. 15078.

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Lord Raglan to a state that excited deep anxiety in the mind of every Englishman."* But how, it was asked, did it appear that the incapacity of Lord Aberdeen and his colleagues had conduced to so lamentable a result? Mr. Roebuck himself admitted that the army which had been sent out was "unparalleled in its efficiency and its numbers," and that its soldiers had been "equipped as we had never equipped soldiers before." Mr. Drummond had stopped for an instant the current of his invective, to pronounce "the landing of the troops in the Crimea a well-effected and creditable operation—a most wonderful thing, considering the extent of the force to be landed." On all sides, it was allowed that the harbour of Balaklava was actually "incumbered,"—to borrow Mr. Roebuck's expression—with stores of all kinds for the clothing and housing of the army. Was this evidence that the Government had "acted under a continual paralysis?"† But Mr. Herbert did not rest his defence of the Ministry upon these admissions. The War departments, he admitted, were defective in organization; but the Duke of Newcastle had already overcome some of the worst disadvantages of that organization, by assembling together the heads of the different departments, for the purpose of receiving instructions and making suggestions upon business which could not be transacted by one department alone.

* S. Herbert, H. of Com. Jan. 26.

† Roebuck, H. of Com. Jan. 29.

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Had he not thus taken a most important step towards combining a due subordination to one head, with a proper division of labour? It had been necessary, for the purpose of equipping the army, to remodel, recruit, create even, different branches of the service, which had been starved or destroyed during the forty years' peace—such as the commissariat, the medical staff, the transport service, the ambulance corps, and the mounted police corps. Was this a proof of indolence? Was it under the influence of "a continual paralysis" that some 56,000 officers and men, 5000 or 6000 horses, and some 70,000 tons of provisions, ammunition, and stores, besides upwards of 100,000 tons of coal had been carried to the East—to say nothing of the Baltic expedition, which swelled the totals conveyed to 3000 officers, 81,000 men, 5,600 horses, and 254,000 tons of provisions and stores? It was true, that a waggon train was not attached to the army in the Crimea last December; but 5000 beasts of burden had been provided by the Commissariat, months before; and at the time when it was imputed to the Government that the peace establishment had not been converted in a day into a completely efficient war establishment, since they had neglected to organize a waggon corps, such a body was, in fact, already formed. The markets of the South of France, of Spain, Tunis, and Egypt had been ransacked for mules and horses, and the Duke of Newcastle had had the satisfaction of forming, in the first year of the

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war, such a corps as the Duke of Wellington himself had not formed until late in his Peninsular campaigns.

Such were the leading facts which were adduced in answer to the accusation of ministerial incapacity. Facts are said to be stubborn things, but when has their stubbornness availed against unreasoning clamour? *Tant pis pour les faits*, exclaimed the French philosopher, when he was told that they did not square with his theory; and Mr. Roebuck and his supporters were as little in the humour to respect them. The time was not propitious for putting a check on feeling, and for calmly separating the evils which are inevitably incident to warfare from those which were owing to human error. Men wanted somebody on whom they might, in the mild language of Mr. Layard, "vent their rage."* Some high official must be made responsible for everything, even for what our law-books call the "act of God;" and when Mr. S. Herbert reminded the grandiloquent assertors of our naval supremacy, that the winds of Heaven sometimes rebuked human arrogance, the religious people of England scoffed at the suggestion of a providential reproof with the philosophical scepticism of a Hume, or the sarcastic unbelief of a Voltaire. But although fable and exaggeration had been busy, in as well as out of the House, it cannot be doubted that the motion was carried because the popular voice was in its favour. It owed its success

* Speech at Liverpool.

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to the same influences which induce honourable members to vote for shutting up Maynooth, and against opening places of innocent recreation and refreshment on Sundays. It was carried by the votes of men whose better judgment whispered to them that the whole inquiry would prove, as Mr. Sidney Herbert prophetically denounced it, a gigantic sham, but who wisely acted upon the principle: *populus vult decipi, decipiatur.*

It was not, however, simply upon the ground that no case had been made against the Ministry, that the motion was resisted. The inconvenience and the futility of the inquiry were foretold and urged.

As to the army, it was impossible to make any satisfactory investigation into its condition or into the conduct of its chief officers, without summoning these home, or sending out a commission for their examination. This difficulty was so obvious, and has since been so completely admitted by the Committee, that it now seems surprising that the inquiry was not limited, as Mr. Vernon Smith suggested, to the conduct of the Administration at home. If the investigation was voted, "the first person that should be called," that gentleman pointed out, "should be Lord "Raglan; then the Quartermaster General, "then the Adjutant-General, and all the per-"sons in the Crimea reputed to have failed "in their duty." "It was said," observed Sir F. Baring, "that they (the House) would put the

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" saddle on the right horse; they would get at the " persons really to blame. He did not believe that " this end would be attained, provided the inquiry " were conducted fairly. So far as the departments " at home were concerned, their defence to an in- " quiry would be that they had done all they " could by sending out stores of all kinds to the " army abroad; and if the inquiry stopped there, " and the departments at home were acquitted, " the natural conclusion would be, that it was " those abroad who were to blame. But were they " to be condemned unheard? Such a course could " never be consented to. But then, to carry out " an inquiry into their conduct, it would be neces- " sary to call home the chiefs, and all the parties " concerned; so that, after paralysing the depart- " ments at home, they would then proceed to " paralyse the departments abroad." " Your in- " quiry," said Mr. Gladstone, " will never take " place as a real inquiry; or if it did, it would " lead to nothing but confusion and disturbance, " increased disaster, shame at home, and weakness " abroad. It would convey no consolation to those " whom you seek to aid, but it would carry malignant " joy to the hearts of the enemies of England."

Such considerations, however, were not only disregarded, they were actually made the ground for voting for the Committee. " The first " portion of the motion," Mr. Bentinck believed, " was entirely impracticable," and yet he voted

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for it. In the same way, Mr. Layard, in a spirit of patriotism, harmonising admirably with that love of truth and good taste which the public has not failed, upon further acquaintance, to discern in him, was as much captivated by the mischief promised by the second branch of the inquiry, as Mr. Bentinck was by the impracticability of the first. "He knew that the Government could not "grant this Committee; for if such a Committee "were sitting upstairs, the hands of the Govern- "ment would be shackled, and disclosures might "be made which would be most prejudicial to "the public service." But patriots of Mr. Layard's calibre have already gone a long way towards the attainment of their end, when they have succeeded in shackling the hands of Government, and prejudicing the public service; and it was but natural, therefore, that such a prospect should rather invite than deter him. Mr. Rice protested against the Committee, on the ground that "what was wanted was, not inquiry, but a prompt and decisive remedy." He declared that "the "proposed inquiry would prevent the application "of that remedy, by fettering the hands of the "Executive, in whatever hands the duty of carry- "ing on the war might be placed." He warned the House, that "a Committee upstairs, dragging "its slow length along from month to month, "while promising everything, could perform no- "thing, and would end by disappointing the just

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"expectations of the people." These considerations, however, did not prevail, and the Administration was overthrown.

The Committee was appointed. The Committee has reported; and its chairman has since proposed to the House, to visit with severe reprehension every member of Lord Aberdeen's Cabinet. It is now time, therefore, that we should strike the balance of profit and loss, and ascertain what the House or the Country has gained by the inquiry; how that inquiry has been conducted; and how far the leading conclusions which the tribunal has arrived at, are supported by the evidence. The immediate effect of the vote was unquestionably to deprive the country of a ministry at a period when the voice of patriotism demanded the suspension of party strife, and the firm support of the Executive. It drove from power the heads of every department in the State, at a moment when it was of vital importance that those departments should be under chiefs familiar with their details, their working, and, above all, their defects. It dealt a blow on the cause of constitutional Government, by affording reasonable grounds for the fear entertained abroad, that a ruling power which holds office at the will of public opinion, is too weak for energetic action, since it may at any moment fall a victim to popular discontent, however irrational and unjust.

It is true, a change of ministry is not, in this country, attended with danger to our institu-

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tions; but a change of ministry is, after all, a change in the Executive power of the State, and it cannot be effected, even in times of profound peace, without a degree of inconvenience which justifies the condemnation of all factious attacks on existing Governments. On the other hand, if a ministry be incompetent—if it be neglectful of its duties, or indifferent to the welfare of the country, whose affairs it is called upon to administer, the sooner it makes way for better men the better. Whether the nation has gained or lost by Mr. Roebuck's triumph depends, then, on whether the charges against Lord Aberdeen's Government have been substantiated.

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II.

THE COMMITTEE.

The task which the Committee had to execute was to ascertain, first, what evils had really befallen the army in the East, and next, to what causes those evils were attributable. At first sight, their proceedings bear the appearance of vigour and determination of research. Witness after witness was called to testify to the condition of the camp, of Balaklava, of the transports, and of the hospitals at Scutari. In their zeal, indeed, the Committee extended their inquiry beyond its legitimate limits; and a body which was directed to "inquire into the condition of our army before Sebastopol," proceeded to examine into its state at Varna and Gallipoli, long before it had reached the Crimea. Passing to the second branch of their subject, they summoned before them ministers of state, heads of departments, and secretaries of boards, and overwhelmed them for days and weeks, with torrents of questions. Here no tediousness of detail, no pettiness of squabble, could deter our indefatigable inquisitors. They plunged into the "two bays" at Woolwich with as much ardour as though the taking of Sebastopol had depended upon their ascertaining whether the order for them had preceded their construction, or *vice versâ*. They entered minutely into the dissensions of the members of the Board of Ordnance, and spelt over the correspondence of Lord Aberdeen and Lord J.

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Russell, with as much zealous littleness of spirit as if their chief duty had been to provide tittle-tattle for the clubs. Captain Boxer's pretensions and Messrs. Kynaston's contract became in the same way the subjects of anxious and protracted investigation. Three large blue books, containing 21,421 queries and answers, are the expensive monument of all this chaotic industry; and if their bulk can raise Mr. Roebuck's fame, they have assuredly added at least a cubit to that learned gentleman's moral stature.

In examining the contents of these ponderous tomes, however, the most desultory reader cannot fail to be struck with some curious peculiarities in the mode in which the investigation was conducted. The first circumstance that attracts attention is, that those who have been loudest in demanding that the right man should be put into the right place, systematically asked the wrong question of the wrong witness. Was the Committee, for instance, desirous of ascertaining the condition of the army before Sebastopol during that period in which it was represented to have been "horrible and heart-rending"—that is, during December and January? They examined chiefly men who had left the camp in the beginning or middle of November—Sir De Lacy Evans, General Bentinck, Lord Cardigan, and the Duke of Cambridge—while to the only General Officer who had passed the entire winter on the spot, General Burgoyne, they did not address a

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single question on the subject. Did they desire to learn to what extent the men had been left unsupplied with provisions? Instead of calling for authentic returns, signed by the Commissariat, and countersigned by the military authorities, such as, happily for the cause of truth, were subsequently thrust upon them by Sir C. Trevelyan, they satisfied themselves with extracting from two or three gentlemen who had paid a ten days' visit to the trenches, whatever gossip they had picked up on the point. Did they desire to know the number of patients received from time to time in the hospitals of Scutari? They questioned on the subject, a gentleman connected with the *Times* newspaper; and finding that Mr. Macdonald was unable to throw any light on it, they carried the inquiry no further, but left the public to believe, on Mr. S. G. Osborne's authority,* that as many as 7000 patients were at one time accumulated in the place, although the weekly hospital returns in the War Office would have supplied the information with statistical exactness. Surely a tribunal which had a Queen's Counsel for a president, and a gentleman trained in an attorney's office as his right-hand man, might have been expected to go to the right quarter for their evidence. The world is slow to presume that men of legal education are wholly ignorant of the first principles of judicial investigation; and yet this presumption, it must, neverthe-

* 9230.

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less, adopt, unless it prefers to believe that design, not folly, was at the bottom of the matter, and that the inquiry was, as Mr. S. Herbert had foretold, a sham—that what the prosecuting members of the tribunal really sought was false accusations, and not true facts.

Between the two theories it is difficult to choose, for there is abundant evidence in support of both. The amusing perversity which consulted soldiers as to the causes of disease;* captains of transports as to the efficiency of the ambulance corps;† sea doctors as to the supply of forage given to cavalry horses;‡ Royal Dukes as to the best mode of sending knapsacks to Balaklava;§ newspaper correspondents as to the organization of military hospitals,‖ and shipowners as to the intentions of Government,¶ would sustain the more innocent view of the conduct of the Committee. When an ex-minister of state could gravely ask a clergyman who had never even seen the "Prince," whether there was port wine on board that vessel?**—when a gentleman of Mr. Roebuck's rank at the bar could not avoid the palpable absurdity of asking a witness, who had never seen the Crimea, whether there were materials on the spot for making a road from Balaklava to the camp;††—when Mr. Layard, notwithstanding his apprenticeship in the legal profession,

* 553, 735, 1152. † 5066. ‡ 2126. § 4194.
‖ 7129. ¶ 3259,60.
** Mr. Osborne, 9082. †† Sir C. Trevelyan, 14058.

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could, without any apparent fear of ridicule, inquire of Dr. Andrew Smith, who had not stirred from St. James' Place for years, whether he was aware, "of his own knowledge," that up to December the troops in the East were without clothing*—when the blue books are found teeming at every page with questions equally senseless and equally futile, there are good grounds for believing that some of the members of the Committee, at all events, were not very competent to discharge the duties which they had undertaken.

On the other hand, the ready reception of accusations against anybody and everybody connected with the army or its various departments, from the Secretary of State and Commander-in-Chief to the humblest commissariat clerk or apothecary's assistant, and the eagerness displayed for the publication of the name of every person attacked, especially if he happened to be 3000 miles off, shewed that the love of fair play was not predominant.†

But it is unnecessary to dwell upon the innumerable specimens of malice and impotence with which the Sebastopol blue books abound, or which were reported in the more faithful and less cooked columns of the public press. The Committee

* 8781.

† 2186, 2447, 10104, 12131, 12199, 12986, 13012, &c, &c. See also the proposal of Messrs. Roebuck and Layard—the two gentlemen who monopolised the glory of this crusade against the absent—to name in the report every person on whom the evidence cast blame. 5th Rep. 54.

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admit in their report that they have failed to a great extent to perform what they undertook. The difficulty of their task, they say, "has been enhanced by "the impossibility of summoning some persons as "witnesses who might have furnished important in- "formation. From the same cause, some persons are "left under imputations, in regard to which your "Committee regret that they can pronounce no con- "clusive opinion. The fulness of the investigation "has, moreover, been restricted by considerations of "State policy, so that in the outset of this report, "your Committee must admit that they have been "compelled to end an inquiry, which they have "been unable satisfactorily to complete." Their investigation has been imperfect and one-sided, and this has been owing partly, as they say, to the impracticability of procuring the proper witnesses, but partly also to their having shrunk from examining those within their reach, and partly to their incapacity for conducting an inquiry, and their want of skill in sifting truth from falsehood.

For the former reason, the Commander-in-Chief, the Quartermaster-General, and the Principal Medical Officer of the army in the East, have not been heard; and the public is therefore not in a position to pronounce judgment upon the charges which have been showered upon those officers, unless it be prepared to acquit, or to strike without hearing. But why the Purveyor of the Hospitals at Scutari, who had returned to this country a month before the

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evidence was closed, and upon whom the Committee has cast the most scandalous imputation, was never examined in his defence; why Mr. Roebuck, after insinuating the most insulting accusations of fraud against the Medical Director-General, declined to call the witness who was tendered to disprove them;* why, after evidence condemnatory of the tents of the army was given, the store-keeper of the Ordnance, the party responsible for their condition, was not examined;† why, after receiving charges of mismanagement in the mode of shipping our cavalry horses, the Committee did not, in common fairness, give Captain Riddel, the officer at Woolwich charged with the embarkation of the animals, an opportunity of vindicating the course he pursued;‡ why, notwithstanding their apparent zeal to probe to the bottom the famous question of the "two bays" at the Woolwich laboratory, they nevertheless neglected to summon before them Captain Collinson, the only person who was personally cognisant of the facts of the case;§ why the famous "Dr. Smith of Leeds," who was vouched by Mr. Osborne as his authority for some of his statements, and as a gentleman who could throw so much light upon the horrors of the pest-houses of Scutari, was not called ‖—these are a few of a multitude of similar questions which every reader of the blue books will ask, and which different persons will answer differently, according to

* 12891—12914. † 18356. ‡ 16646.
§ 19403. ‖ 9005.

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the intensity of their faith in the honesty or intelligence of those actively engaged in the conduct of the inquiry. Whatever the answer may be, however, it is clear that the Committee did not prosecute their inquiries as far as they ought, or as far as they might; and that, while they frittered away the public time on numerous irrelevant topics, they neglected to obtain evidence of the most important kind, and proved unable to test the accuracy of that which was brought before them.*

Notwithstanding all these defects, however, the blue books are valuable for some purposes. They are a repertory of sober and stubborn facts, as well as of extravagant fictions; and as the Home Authorities were heard fully, if not completely, in their defence, they afford the means of forming a tolerably just opinion of the conduct and capacity of the statesmen who were in power during the first year of the war. Notwithstanding the presence of much fable and exaggeration, a fair view, also, of the real condition of the camp may be obtained from their pages. While, therefore, the Committee has wholly failed in so much of its task as relates to the conduct of our departments abroad, it has given the country the means of deciding how far the representations

* With the exception of General Peel, there was hardly a member on the Committee who appeared to have the faintest notion of cross-examining a witness—that is, of ascertaining the source and the character of the information laid before them. No wonder that heaps of the idlest gossip were received without suspicion, and published without hesitation.

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which horrified and humiliated it last winter were true, and how far the charges against Ministers were well or ill founded. These questions merit examination; for although much has been written and much spoken upon them already, the truth has not yet reached the public; for the most valuable and trustworthy evidence is to be found not in the oral testimony which appeared in the daily papers, but in the authentic documents which lie buried in the appendices of the blue books.

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III.

THE PLAN OF THE CAMPAIGN.

The Duke of Newcastle stated, at the outset of his evidence, that he had, as Secretary of State, the general direction of the war, and was responsible for its conduct. He was responsible, not merely for the plan of the campaign, but upon him fell the duty of determining the number of troops to be employed in executing it,* and of putting in motion all the departments of the State by whose combined exertions the war was to be carried on. Upon him it devolved to give directions to the Horse Guards for the movement of infantry and cavalry, and to the Ordnance for that of artillery, engineers, sappers and miners.† Mr. Sidney Herbert latterly relieved him to some extent from the organization and superintendence of the Medical department,‡ but he had to explain to those who managed the Commissariat and Ordnance, the duties which they would have to perform in providing food, transport, clothing, ammunition and stores for the army. ‖ He had, in a word, not only to direct the general military operations of the forces of the empire, but to see that a force of due efficiency in *personnel* and *matériel* was equipped and transported to the seat of war—that it was properly provided with arms, ammunition, and every other means of injuring the enemy, and next,

* 14336. † 14343. ‡ \4372. ‖ 14372.

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that it was, itself, properly fed, clad, housed, and doctored.

The general plan of the campaign demands no lengthened observations; for with the exception of Lord Ellenborough, who would have sought success by a new reading of the maxim *divide et impera*, and have sent one of the allied armies into the swamps of the Dobrutscha and the wastes of Bessarabia, while he would have despatched the other in quest of health and glory to the mountains of Armenia and the plains of Georgia,* it has not been seriously disputed that the scheme was as well conceived as it was vigorous. The gossip of the clubs certainly attributed to Lord Hardinge and to Lord Seaton opinions condemnatory of the Crimean invasion; but it turns out that the former never whispered a word of disapproval, and that the latter entirely approved of it.† To the imputation that the invasion of the Crimea was a mere after-thought—the hasty adoption of a popular recommendation,—the despatch of the 10th of April, addressed by the Duke of Newcastle to Lord Raglan, gives by its date a sufficient answer. "Your first duty," says this document, "will be to prevent, by every means "in your power, the advance of the Russian army "on Constantinople, if it should appear that there "is any present serious intention of making such "an attempt; but you must bear in mind, that "if the Russian General should make no demon-

* Speech in House of Lords. † 15073.

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" strations of any further onward movement, it " may be essential for the attainment of the objects " of the war, that some operations of an offensive " character should be undertaken by the allied " armies. No blow which could be struck at " the southern extremities of the Russian empire " would be so effective for this purpose as the " taking of Sebastopol." And as the first step towards preparing for this great object, Lord Raglan is directed to make " careful but secret inquiry into " the present amount and condition of the Russian " army in the Crimea, and the strength of the for- " tress of Sebastopol."* The despatch goes on to instruct the Commander-in-Chief to inquire into the defences of that place on the land side; the facilities for disembarkation on the coast of the Crimea; the strength and constitution of the Russian army in that country; and the supply of provisions and water available for the support of the garrison. On the 29th of June—two days after the telegraph had brought to London the news that the siege of Silistria had been raised — instructions were sent to besiege Sebastopol, unless the General had information in his possession, unknown in this country, which satisfied him that such an operation could not be undertaken with a reasonable prospect of success.†

The Duke of Newcastle's design has sometimes been considered crude and imperfect, because it did

* 14422. † 14422.

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not appear to include the adoption of any steps for cutting off the communications by which the Russians in the Crimea drew their supplies from the adjoining provinces of the empire, or for injuring their ports and commerce in the Black Sea and the Sea of Azof. Odessa was not bombarded, Kertch was left unmolested, and no attempt was made to seize the two gates of the peninsula—Perekop and Genitchi. The critics, however, who, in the plenitude of their ignorance, imputed these omissions to the want of zeal or of sense in the Ministers, without any other evidence than the fact that the acts in question were not performed, have now learned that the statesmen to whose hands the conduct of the war was confided, had projected the very course which was executed in May last with such brilliant success. In the despatch to Lord Raglan already quoted, of the 10th of April, the Duke of Newcastle says: "As all "communications by sea are now in the hands of "the Allied Powers, it becomes of importance to "endeavour to cut off all communication by land "between the Crimea and the other parts of the "Russian dominions. This would be effectually "done by the occupation of the isthmus of Perekop, "and I would suggest to you that if a sufficient "number of the Turkish army can now be spared "for this purpose, it would be highly important "that measures should be taken without delay for "sending an adequate force to that point, and asso-"ciating with the troops of the Sultan such English

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" and French officers as would assist by their advice " in holding permanently this position. With the " same object, important assistance might be ren- " dered by Admiral Dundas, if he has yet been able " to obtain any vessels of a light draught, which " would prevent the passage of Russian troops to " the Crimea through the Sea of Azof."* To assist these operations in shallow water, six steamers of light draught were sent out in the autumn, and Captain Grey at Gibraltar, and Admiral Stewart at Malta, as well as Admiral Dundas, were empowered to purchase and fit any vessels suitable for that service.†

On the 5th of April, 1854, just one week after war was declared, Admiral Dundas was directed to concert measures with the French Admiral Hamelin, for the blockade of the Russian ports of the Black Sea.‡ The plan adopted by the two naval officers contemplated the stoppage, at the Bosphorus, of the entrance of trading vessels into the Black Sea, and it was rejected by the two Governments as entirely ineffective for its purpose, besides being inconsistent with the law of nations. Before another could be arranged, the expedition to the Crimea was undertaken, and as it engaged the entire of the available naval forces, no blockade could be established until the invasion had been effected. As soon as that great operation had been successfully concluded, the subject was reverted to. On the

* 14422. † 21237. ‡ Sir J. Graham, 21196.

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13th of October the following despatch was sent to Admiral Dundas :—

" The Secretary to the Admiralty to Vice-Admiral Dundas.

" Admiralty, Oct. 13, 1854.

" Sir,—I am commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, with reference to the operations of the fleet under your orders, to call your special and particular attention to the necessity of exercising the utmost vigilance and care in preventing the movement of craft of all descriptions proceeding out of the Bay of Kherson and the River Dneister, and I am to signify their directions to you to take every precaution in your power to prevent communication with the Crimea from ports in that direction. My Lords are further of opinion that, whenever the means at your disposal will admit, proper measures should be concerted with your colleagues in command of the allied forces for obtaining an entrance by the Gulf of Kertch into the Sea of Azoff, with a view to interrupt the communications of the enemy with the eastern shores of the Crimea, to which their Lordships have always attached the greatest importance. In concert, likewise, with your colleagues, my Lords consider that no opportunities should be lost to occupy the attention of the enemy by frequent attacks upon all parts of the coast extending from the mouths of the Danube to the isthmus of Perekop, and that any proper opportunity for the bombardment of Odessa should not be omitted."

On the 25th of October, the Admiralty reminded Admiral Dundas that " with the exception of the " mouths of the Danube, no such blockade in the " Black Sea has as yet been established. Odessa is " open; Kertch is open; the whole coast from Sebas- " topol to the entrance of the Sea of Azof has remained " unmolested and unwatched by the cruisers of the " Allies. The preparation of the means of trans- " port for the allied army from Varna to the Crimea,

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" the embarkation and disembarkation of troops,
" and co-operation with the army in the siege of
" Sebastopol, are reasons why these measures of
" blockade and of watching the enemy's ports may
" have been necessarily suspended or interrupted.
" But your attention is now specially called to this
" subject."

Again, on the 3rd of November, the Admiral is directed to "lose no time in concerting measures " with that (the French) officer, in order that effec- " tive blockades may be legally established, and " proper notices given with respect to the coast, " and all the rivers and ports from the mouths of " the Danube inclusive, round by Odessa and the " bay of Kherson, to the gulf of Perekop, and along " the north-west coast of the Crimea to Cape Tark- " han. Similar blockades should be established of " the gulf of Kertch, and thereby of all the ports " and territories of Russia within the Sea of Azof, " and from thence of all the coast of Circassia, now " occupied by Russian forces; and should the naval " force at the disposal of yourself and of Admiral " Hamelin admit of it, you are to take further steps " to blockade such ports, and such portions of the " south-west and south-east coasts of the Crimea as " you may deem necessary, and especially the port " of Theodosia and the bay of Kaffa." *

Again, on the 8th of December, another despatch was sent:—

* 21198.

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"Admiralty, Dec. 8, 1854.

"Sir,—I am commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to call your attention to their letter of the 13th of October last, No. 622, respecting an attack on the port of Odessa at any proper opportunity,

"Although this question has been postponed, at the request of the Generals commanding the allied forces on shore, my Lords are of opinion it should be again taken into consideration, with a view to an effectual operation whenever circumstances will permit.

"I am, &c.,

"Vice-Admiral Dundas. "R. OSBORNE."

These plans were not carried out, it is true, but what blame attaches to the Ministers? There were "political circumstances"* which prevented the enforcement of the blockade; and the Committee prudently abstained from inquiring minutely what those considerations were. They were trenching, they were reminded by Sir James Graham, on delicate ground, for "it was necessary to proceed in concert with our ally in this matter."† But there were military as well as political obstacles in the way. As to Odessa, Admiral Dundas writes on the 8th of November—"On the arrival of the "Sphynx, Gladiator, and Stromboli, I prepared a "squadron for the purpose of bombarding Odessa, "and had obtained the consent of Vice-Admiral "Hamelin for the co-operation of the French steam-"frigate Cacique, already employed off Odessa with "Captain Goldsmith, of the Sidon.

"Yesterday I received from Admiral Hamelin

* 14777.

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"a letter, of which I enclose a copy, and I have "consequently postponed the bombardment for the "present."

The enclosure was in the following terms:— "Mon cher Amiral,—Je reçois à l'instant, une lettre "du Général Canrobert, lequel me mande qu'il est "d'accord avec Lord Raglan, pour trouver qu'une "démonstration de bâtimens-à-vapeur allant jeter "quelque obus dans Odessa serait, dans les cir- "constances actuelles, bien plus désavantageuse "qu'utile.

"En conséquence, les généraux demandent qu'il "n'y soit donné aucune suite."

If Kertch was not attacked, and the Sea of Azoff scoured, it was not because the naval and military authorities were insensible of the importance of striking the blow. On the 27th of October, Admiral Dundas writes to the Secretary of the Admiralty, "I have always been fully aware of "the value of the Sea of Azoff to the enemy, and "that could only be attained by the possession of "Kertch. Some weeks ago, I urged that 2,000 "men"—not a seventh of the force which effected this important object under Sir Edmund Lyons— "should be embarked for that place, but their "Lordships are aware, that from disease and the "action at the Alma, our troops have suffered "great loss; and the French Admiral, when he "applied to his General for assistance to attack "Kertch, was told of the impossibility of sending

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"a man." And at a time when his own marines were taken from his ships to prosecute the operations of the siege, it was impracticable for us to furnish our Admiral with even the small force which he demanded, and without it, it was impossible to take, much less hold, possession of the place.* In the next place, the Straits of Kertch were blocked up like the mouth of the harbour of Sebastopol. Forty vessels were sunk across it, and if many of them had not been carried away during the winter by the current, Sir Edmund Lyons would have found it no easy matter to penetrate into the Sea of Azof.†

It has been said that the bold enterprise against the great fortress of Russia, was entered upon without sufficient information of the enemy's real condition; and Lord Stratford de Redcliffe has been charged with having neglected, in July 1853, an opportunity which was offered to him by Admiral Dundas, of procuring precise intelligence of the state of Sebastopol. Those who have perused the evidence taken before the Committee, have learned, by

* 20453, 20618–9.

† Sir E. Lyons' despatch of May 26, *London Gazette*, June 6. The *Times* of June 7, which contains this despatch affords a good illustration of the silly confidence with which censure is sometimes lavished. While the Admiral states in one column that some only of the sunken vessels had been removed by the current, and that a French steamer had touched on one of those which still remained, a well-informed gentleman loftily sneers at the late Government for having been "humbugged" into the belief that such obstacles ever existed.

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this time, the folly as well as the injustice of placing reliance upon every *ex parte* statement which malice, ignorance, or misconception, may dictate—especially when the persons attacked are at the convenient distance of some 2000 or 3000 miles. Until, therefore, Lord Stratford's version of the circumstances under which Admiral Dundas' Maltese was left unprovided with passports for Sebastopol is heard, they will suspend their judgment on the point; for even if nearly half a century's service had failed to kindle zeal for his country's cause in the veteran diplomatist's breast, his well known detestation of Russia, and the personal antipathy which notoriously existed between him and the late Emperor—to say nothing of his solicitude for the maintenance of the Ottoman Empire—ought to be sufficient guarantees, in the eyes of all unprejudiced men, that he did not heedlessly reject any reasonable means of ascertaining the true condition of Sebastopol. But is it true, as the Committee has, by a majority of one, asserted, that the Administration ordered the expedition without adequate information of the amount of the enemy's force, the strength of his fortresses, and the resources of his country? "Every "exertion was made," says the Duke of Newcastle, "through the means not only of consuls "in that part of the world, but of ministers "at the other Courts of Europe, to ascertain the "condition and position, and the relative strength

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"of all the corps of the Russian army, and those "reports were made through the Foreign Office and "sent to me, and they were always sent by me with "such comments as I was able to offer, to Lord "Raglan. After the declaration of war, the Consuls "in the Russian Empire were of course sent home, "and I saw them as they arrived. From them I "obtained the best information we could as to what "was supposed to be the strength of the Russian "army. They did not very much vary, and they "were of course sent invariably to Lord Raglan."* Their general agreement is evidence either that the reports were correct, or that the witnesses had conspired to deceive the Government, or that they had all been themselves deceived. When the number of agents consulted, and the variety of sources from which they must have derived their information are considered, it is difficult to come to any other conclusion than that their representations were true. But further, Sir James Graham says that he obtained in July, from an Englishman, who had left the Crimea but a month before, a most circumstantial and complete account of that country, its locality, harbours, roads, productions, supply of water, and a statement of the Russian forces.† This gentleman had an interview with Lord Raglan.

What proof, on the other hand, has the Committee that the information in the possession of the Government was scanty or false? Was the Russian

* 15041. † 21239.

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force which met the allied armies on the heights of the Alma calculated to overwhelm them, either by their numbers, their discipline, or their armament? To make out that the Administration "had no adequate information as to the amount of force in the Crimea or Sebastopol," the Committee must press into their service Osten Sacken's host, which posted to the Crimea in arabas and waggons, and vehicles of every shape and kind, six weeks after that peninsula had been successfully invaded. And even then they would fail to prove that we were overmatched; for the immortal day of Inkermann proves the reverse.

Where, in the next place, is the evidence that the Government was ignorant of the resources of the country? The condition of the army "without food, without clothing, without shelter, without ammunition," will, of course, be triumphantly cited in support of the assertion. It will be seen in the following pages, how far those assertions are true; but in the meanwhile, it may be observed, that even if it be the fact that the army was in the state thus described, its condition was referable to far different causes than ignorance of the resources of a country, to which, with the exception of a few square miles, we had no access during the whole of the winter.

But we had no information, it is urged, of the state of the fortifications of Sebastopol. In what respect has our ignorance been proved? Its sea defences were well known—so well known that Admiral Dundas declared that the town could not

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be taken by his fleet.* As to the fortifications on the land side, the Committee have no evidence on the subject.

Sir John Burgoyne, the chief engineer officer of the expedition, was called before them. He could have told them in what condition he found the land defences of Sebastopol on the arrival of the allies before the place. And yet, will it be believed that they did not ask him a single question on the point? They frittered away the public time, and bored the old General with idle interrogatories about the organization of the Commissariat,† with which he had as much to do as the man in the moon—with the temper of bill-hooks,‡ with his experience of cutting tools,§ and with the history of the implements which were employed in Portugal in 1828.‖ But not one word, from the beginning to the end of his lengthened examination, was breathed as to the extent or condition of the land fortifications of the town in September. The veteran engineer was actually suffered to leave the Committee-room without having thrown any light upon the subject with which he was peculiarly conversant, beyond giving a disparaging opinion of the Russian earth-works, which were constructed at a later period, and admitting that, even after actual inspection of the ground, he had not expected "to be detained before

* 20471. † 17475. ‡ 17263.
§ 17264. ‖ 17270.

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"it until the bad weather really came on." * If this astounding silence is to be attributed to their utter incapacity to ask the right question of the right witness, they might surely have got over their difficulty by interrogating upon the subject any of their witnesses who had seen the town in September. They had Generals before them. Sir De Lacy Evans, the Duke of Cambridge, General Bentinck could have told them something on the subject. Or if they preferred the opinion of cavalry officers, Lord Lucan and Lord Cardigan were quite at their command. Indeed, upon such a topic they might have consulted with advantage, even the chaplain who gave evidence before them. They absolutely shrank from venturing a single question upon it. And this is what Mr. Roebuck calls an inquiry! Search all the annals of noodledom, and you will not find a parallel to such imbecility. It is comparable to nothing but the audacity which ventures, after so pitiable an exhibition of impotence, to invite the House of Commons to declare that the Administration did not know the strength of the fortress which they undertook to destroy.

The charge is, in truth, one of those convenient inventions to which a narrow and factious spirit readily gives birth, *pro re natâ*, when subsequent events give them some semblance of foundation. It has been admitted by Lord Aberdeen, the Duke

* 17218.

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of Newcastle, and almost every other member of the late Cabinet, that the expedition was undertaken in the belief that Sebastopol would be carried by a *coup de main*, and the disappointment of those hopes is absolutely the only ground for the opinion that the design was conceived without any information as to the strength of the place. But can anything be more futile and illogical than such reasoning? If a storm had been attempted and been defeated, there would have been some ground for the belief that the Ministry and the chiefs of the army were ignorant of the enemy's resources. But the *coup de main* was not attempted. Why Sir George Cathcart's proposal to carry the place by storm was not accepted, the Committee never dreamed of asking. General Burgoyne could have told them what his view of the matter was, at the time. Sir De Lacy Evans had also, it is believed, a strong opinion on the subject, which might have been elicited. But the Committee which was appointed to discover the truth, failed to make any inquiry on one of the most important and most interesting topics connected with their investigation. It is possible, indeed, that "motives of state policy" were the cause of their silence—that they believed that the secret belonged to our allies, as well as to ourselves. But, although this may excuse their omission, it ought to have been an additional reason for abstaining from the expression of any opinion on the subject.

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To offer any conjecture on it is of little use; but it is impossible to forget that the French army was under the command of the man who recalled the first expedition to Kertch, and who has voluntarily and honourably retired from a post for which he felt himself incompetent. The Russians did not believe that the place could hold out. It is well known that in the town, an immediate assault, and, as the necessary consequence, the surrender of the place, were expected as soon as the red coats were seen descending into the valley of the Tchernaya. Mr. Lawrence Oliphant asserts that in October, 1852, the defences consisted solely of the Malakoff tower;* and every man who saw the place in September last, knows that the fortifications on the land side were not calculated to offer a serious resistance. All those works which have since defied the best efforts of the besiegers, have been thrown up since the siege was commenced. The successful defence of the place is, in truth, the result of a science, courage, and vigour, which can never enter into reasonable calculations, and which, consequently, disconcert the best plans. Had the projected expedition been abandoned last June, on the ground that, although the town was open, an engineer of marvellous skill, and a garrison of heroic constancy would be found inside, there is not one of those profound strategists who now shake their heads at the insane folly which conceived, and the incapacity

* Letter to the *Times*, June 30.

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which conducted the operation, who would not have exclaimed against the absurdity of balancing such improbable contingencies against the reasonable expectations that an open town would yield to the science of our engineers, and the valour of our troops.

Had the Government shrunk from the expedition, we should probably have had a Parliamentary Committee expressing their deep regret that an Administration which possessed accurate information of the strength of the enemy's fortress, the resources of his country, and the amount of his forces, should, from pusillanimity or treachery, have shrunk from an undertaking which bore the fairest promise of success—and that they should have given the enemy time to prepare for a blow which, if struck in time, would have permanently impaired the power and prestige of the enemy, and have restored to this country the blessings of peace.

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IV.

THE ARMY AND ITS RECRUITMENT.

War was declared on the 29th of March, 1854, But already, early in January, Sir John Burgoyne, and three other engineer officers, had proceeded to Turkey, with directions to inspect its means of defence. They were soon followed by Lieutenant-Colonel (then Major) Dickson, R.A., who afterwards earned so much distinction in the Crimea, Lieutenant Burke, who was killed on the Danube, and two other engineer officers, who were instructed to examine the country with reference to its salubrity, and to reconnoitre the Danube and Bulgaria.* At the suggestion of Dr. Andrew Smith, the Director-General of the Medical Board, three medical men of high rank in the service, Dr. Dumbreck, Dr. Linton, and Dr. Mitchell, were sent on the 28th of February, to make inquiries on the spot into the nature of the climate, and the prevalent diseases of the country.† To learn the productive resources of the land to which our troops were to be sent, one of the most intelligent and active officers of the Commissariat, Deputy-Commissary-General Smith, was ordered from Corfu to Turkey.‡ The order was given on the 9th of February, and on the 12th of March, Mr. Smith and his staff were established at Constantinople. On the 11th of

* 14382. † 8075. ‡ 14384, 5.

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February 10,000 men were ordered to Malta, and on the 21st of March, they were sent to Gallipoli, the place which Sir John Burgoyne, and the French Colonel Ardent, had jointly recommended for occupation in the first instance.

Thus, before the war was begun, the country in which our troops were to operate had been examined with reference to its strategetical, its sanitary and its commercial resources, and a large body of men was at hand, if not already on the ground.

The force originally sent out was by no means contemptible, considering the state of the army. It was no slight effort for a State whose army is not only small, but scattered over the four quarters of the globe, to collect and throw upon the seat of war some 25,000 men within a month or two after war had been declared, and the Minister who accomplished this can afford to smile at the critics who allege that he did not seriously believe that there would be any fighting. He would, indeed, seem more open to the charge of having unduly denuded these islands of forces indispensable to their protection, and he would be deserving of condemnation on this ground, if his conduct in instantly sending every available soldier to the scene of action, did not show how keenly sensible he was that success in warfare depends upon the vigour and rapidity with which blows are dealt on the enemy. As soon as he saw that hostilities were imminent, he recalled ten regiments from the colonies, and by this means,

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was enabled to form a reserve, and to supply the army with reinforcements.*

But we are told that the formation of a reserve was neglected. "The Committee must express their "regret that the formation of a large reserve at "home, and also in the proximity of the seat of "war, was not considered at a much earlier period." Quite right. It is a thousand pities that we did not commence years ago our preparations for a war, which, but two short years since, every reasonable man voted impossible. It is unfortunate that a monarch, who had, in the course of a long reign, acquired a high reputation for wisdom and moderation, should not have been suspected capable of the extravagant Quixotism of defying the united arms of England and France, and of plunging into a war which would in eighteen months exhaust the resources and dim the prestige of his empire. No doubt, all this is very much and very sincerely to be deplored; and there is not an old woman in the country, who, like the Committee, wise after the event, does not lament that England was not put to the expense of a few millions to prepare for a contingency which, however remote, was, as experience has proved, within the limits of possibility. But when the Committee assert, that "at the date "of the expedition to the East, no reserve was "provided at home adequate to the undertak- "ing," it is right to bear in mind that this is merely

* 14495.

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the opinion of a body of civilians on a military subject.

Let us see, however, what are the facts. The fourth Division was formed as a reserve, very shortly after the outbreak of hostilities. "Whether it was an "adequate reserve," says the Duke of Newcastle, "is a matter of opinion; but that there was a re- "serve, is undoubtedly the fact. . . . From "the first moment when the expedition sailed, there "was a reserve, what was called the reserved divi- "sion, which was subsequently Sir George Cathcart's "division, amounting to between 6000 and 7000 "men."* With so small an army as ours, however, it is not surprising that Sir George's force had left this country for the East in the summer, and formed part of the army which invaded the Crimea. When Administrative reform shall be carried, we shall of course be blessed with a Roebuck at the Horse Guards, and a Layard in Whitehall Gardens. Meanwhile, let us see what our present Commander-in-Chief says of the War Minister's conduct in this matter. "Though people do talk," says Lord Hardinge, "of the propriety of having a reserve, it is "always found in practice to be very desirable to "fight as many men as you can upon a given point. "The Duke of Wellington," he adds, "as is well "known, in his first campaign, in the operations at "Assaye, detached Colonel Stevenson, leaving "himself with only 5000 men, and Colonel Ste- "venson with 6000. The Duke fought the battle

* 15216.

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"of Assaye with half his force, but he never "repeated that experiment. In his subsequent "career, he always brought up to fight the largest "force on the most important point; therefore the "Duke of Newcastle was right in bringing the "reserve under Sir G. Cathcart, to bear upon the "expedition in the Crimea."* Upon its departure, another reserve of about the same strength was formed; and the whole of this body, besides between 3000 and 4000 men sent in drafts, was sent to Lord Raglan shortly after the battle of Inkermann.† And yet the Committee complain that no reserve was formed at Malta till November; as if the place, and not the men, were the material question for consideration.

Many persons were disposed, last spring, to flatter themselves that the courage of their fellow-countrymen would more than compensate for the paucity of their numbers; and there were not wanting officers of rank, who professed a confident belief that 25,000 Englishmen could drive four times their number of Russian serfs out of the Principalities, and dictate the terms of peace to Nicholas in a campaign. But more sober views suggested the expediency of taking steps for reinforcing and increasing our army. Early in the session, an increase of 25,000 men was asked of Parliament, and voted. In May a further number of 15,000 was voted. Further, Acts were introduced and passed for the embodiment of the militia of the three kingdoms.

* 20772. † Id.

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Hardly was Parliament prorogued when 16,000 men were called out, and by the end of November 61 regiments of militia were embodied.* The Committee have expressed their regret that earlier steps were not taken to render the militia available, both for the purpose of obtaining supplies of men, and also, in case of necessity, for the relief of regiments of the line stationed in garrisons in the Mediterranean; but those who complain of delay in this case might indicate some, even the slightest, evil or inconvenience resulting from it. They have not done so. They would have been equally captious, in truth, if the force in question had been put under arms sooner. Even then we should have been told that it was done "too late," unless the cry that it was done "too soon" had appeared more profitable. Such an objection, indeed, might have been successfully enforced by protestations against the precipitate waste of the public money. Undoubtedly the militia has always proved an important reservoir for supplying the ranks of our regular forces, but it was hardly to be expected that a nation of 27,000,000 souls would need such a resource within the first six or eight months of a popular war. Nor does it appear that any reluctance to enlist arose until the exaggerated accounts of the sufferings of the army during the winter reached this country.† After the battle of the Alma, the martial spirit of the country was so much roused, that the recruiting sergeant reaped an ample harvest;

* 20099. † 20099.

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and as soon as that alacrity for the military service subsided, the Government gave it a fresh stimulus by doubling the bounty.*

To ascertain the value of the militia as a nursery for recruits during the past year, the following figures should be examined. For the first four months of the war—that is, from March to June—the number of recruits enlisted monthly exceeded on an average 3000. During the next four months the average number decreased, owing probably to the demand for agricultural labour at that time of the year, to about 2300 monthly. But in November, December, and January, it rose again and exceeded 6200 per month; and in February and March the average number was nearly 4300. The total number of recruits raised during the first thirteen months was 49,150. The total number who joined between November and March was 27,114, of whom 5,087—not a fifth—came from the militia.†

But the exertions of the Government to increase our military resources did not rest here. Having exhausted the various means at their disposal for increasing our army from our own population, they determined to seek for soldiers abroad. The services of the German Legion during the Peninsular war and at Waterloo had not been forgotten by our statesmen, and ought not to have been forgotten by the nation. Sprung from the same stock, allied by many sympathies, and united by the recollection of

* 20098. † 4th Rep., App. 351.

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many a battle field, of which they shared with us the dangers and the glories alike, the German race appeared pre-eminently our ally on this occasion. Their Governments, it is true, were known to lean towards Russia, but it was notorious that the governed hated and dreaded that Power and favoured the Allied Powers, who sought to impose limits on its ambition. The war against Russia was regarded as a war against the common enemy of the human race, and the bold hearts of that country panted for the opportunity of passing from the part of passive spectators, to that of active participators in the struggle. This was the nation to which the Duke of Newcastle and his colleagues chiefly looked for assistance. This was the state of feeling which they wished to turn to our account. Surely they might have reasonably expected that an attempt to call round our standard the martial spirits who chafed at the inaction to which their Governments condemned them, would have been hailed with applause by all parties in the State.

But these hopes and intentions were doomed to disappointment. Party spirit eagerly pounced upon the Foreign Enlistment Bill as a *casus belli*. Provided a party triumph was won in Westminster, it was, to some men, of no consequence whether our men perished in the Crimea for want of help, or not. Not only was the unlucky bill misrepresented and scouted, but the vilest prejudices of the rabble,—those miserable national antipathies

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which education and travel have obliterated in all but the lowest and most ignorant classes of the community,—were unscrupulously excited against the measure, by men who themselves aspired to rule the State. A bill which proposed to permit the introduction into the country of some 15,000 strangers at a time, for the few months needed to teach them the use of arms, was held up to public obloquy as an insidious scheme for overwhelming this free nation with garrisons of foreign mercenaries; and while the aliens were at one moment treated as the objects of terror, they were in the next infamously held up to ridicule and contempt. The misrepresentations to which even Lord Derby did not scruple to stoop were, it is true, cleared up, and faction was forced to be satisfied with crippling the powers of the Ministry by reducing the number of men allowed to be raised. But, unfortunately, the detestable slanders to which utterance had been given in Parliament against almost every people of Europe, did the work of the opposition effectually. The base and unfounded imputations upon their courage, which, to the disgrace of both branches of the legislature, were heaped upon foreign nations, raised a storm against this country; and men who would gladly have joined our cause and helped us, as their fathers had done before them, to fight our battles, as valiant soldiers, indignantly refused to serve a people which stigmatized them as cowards and cut-throats.

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But let them not suppose that those who raised the outcry against them seriously believed in their own slanders. If other nations would learn a lesson in the history of faction, let them contrast those violent rhapsodies with the proceedings of the Committee. There, they will find that one of the articles of accusation actually urged against the Ministry which was thus thwarted in its attempt to raise a German force, was its neglect to accept an offer of 10,000 Spanish guerillas!* Had this been their proposition to Parliament, the world would never have heard enough of the brave deeds of our ancient comrades in arms, or of the folly of a Ministry which could prefer, for the regular operations of a siege, a corps of Spanish Bashi-bazouks, to a body of Germans trained like our own men, similar to them in general national characteristics, and united to them by many glorious recollections.

Such were the various steps taken by the late Government to raise troops, and when the Committee complain that that Ministry did not "at the commencement of the war, take means to augment the ranks of the army beyond the ordinary recruiting," we are left to wonder whether the sentence was written in the full recollection of the facts, or whether the honorable gentlemen obscurely hint a recommendation of conscription—the only known means of levying forces which appears to have been neglected.

* 14479-85.

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V.

THE ARMY IN TURKEY.

The sudden transition from peace to war, and the rapid transport from our own shores to those of a nation with whose language and habits we were not familiar, could not fail to be productive of some inconveniences, and much consequent grumbling. The department which was first made the object of this national source of mental relief was the Commissariat. Hardly had our first regiments set foot upon the beach at Gallipoli when the note of complaint against it was heard, and at every subsequent step in the campaign the same invariable tone of detraction was sustained. The evidence given before the Committee, however, on this branch of the subject is strikingly illustrative of the injustice which is done when men are condemned in total ignorance or imperfect knowledge of the facts on which the judgment purports to be passed.

On the 9th of February, the Duke of Newcastle requested the Treasury to appoint an adequate staff of Commissariat officers to accompany the army,* and, on the 17th, the appointment of a staff of forty, which was subsequently increased to meet the increasing exigencies of the service, was recorded in a Treasury minute. At their head was placed "a man of tried and approved qualities," "remarkably active in mind; quick, ready, and energetic," and

* 13419.

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who was "deliberately selected as one of our best officers."* Such is the character given of Mr. Commissary-General Filder by Sir Charles Trevelyan. Deputy-Commissary-General Smith preceded his chief to Turkey. He arrived there on the 12th of March, and was employed, for about six weeks previously to the arrival of the troops, in active preparation for that event,—in collecting information, securing barracks and warehouses, and entering into contracts for the supply of food.† Those contracts evidently worked well, for, from the first, there was no deficiency of any kind of commissariat supply, although some irregularities, as an occasional delivery of inferior meat, may have occurred, such as no forethought or care can always guard against.‡ No complaints of any importance ever arose with respect to the food of the men until they went to the Crimea. The fresh meat,—beef five times a week, and mutton twice,§—which Mr. Smith procured at Constantinople by contract, was certainly not equal to English, American, or Australian meat, but this was not to be expected at the end of winter in a country where stall-feeding is as utterly unknown as it was a hundred years ago in England. Mr. Smith, however, procured the best that the market afforded; his stipulation with the contractors being that the meat should be equal in quality to that served at the Ambassador's table.‖ "There was nothing to find fault

* 13453, 4. † 15601. ‡ 15601. § 15620. ‖ 15601, 3.

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with," says General Bentinck, "in the food and lodging for the troops at Scutari."* Commissary-General Filder reported, on his arrival at Constantinople, that he found the troops supplied with as great regularity as they were at Chobham.† Before he left for Varna he had arranged a system of reserved depôts for the general purposes of the army. His principal depôt was at Constantinople, where large magazines were formed of salt meat, biscuit, rum, and other articles.‡ He entered into large contracts for fresh meat at Constantinople, Smyrna, and afterwards in Bulgaria.§ "I will "not pretend to say," observed Sir De Lacy Evans, who appears to have had a great deal of controversial complaint and contest with the Commissary-General, "what amount of magazines had "been formed at Varna, but we certainly got "wherewithal to eat."‖ "I think the men had "fresh meat the whole time that we were at "Varna,"¶ says Lord Lucan, notwithstanding all his ire at the indignity of having "very inexperienced" commissariat officers, instead of a real alive Assistant Commissary-General attached to his brigade,** "the troops were very well fed."†† Mr. Filder also contracted with a house at Constantinople for bread, which arrangement was so satisfactory that it was thought unnecessary to get from home a steam mill and bakery which the Treasury had arranged to send out.‡‡

* 1122. † 13436. ‡ 13522. § 13532.
‖ 391. ¶ 6281. ** 6268. †† 6280. ‡‡ 13533,6.

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But the bread gave the men the cholera, suggests Mr. Layard! * Indeed! And yet not even the Duke of Cambridge, with whom it did not agree, could declare it bad. † General Bentinck thought it "very fair indeed. It was "brown, of a dark colour, not the description of "bread which the soldiers are accustomed to eat "in England, but it was very good bread. The "officers and men did not object to it." ‡

Such is the evidence of the principal military officers respecting the ordinary rations supplied to the army. But the army was not left to subsist wholly upon ordinary rations. "We had even "some luxuries," says Major-General Bentinck, "such as tea, and little odds and ends of that sort, "and occasionally, porter for the men." § Before the expedition left England, supplies of porter, sugar, tea, coffee, and rice, had been provided, besides the ordinary rations which were furnished to our soldiers, and were sold to them at cost price at first. It was soon discovered, however, that the men had learned to convert this indulgence into a source of profit. Tea and coffee, for instance, which ought to have sufficed for 72 days, were drawn from the stores in 30, and as the Commissariat could not undertake to minister to the commercial transactions of Quarter-master Sergeants, as well as to the personal comfort of the men, it was determined that a fixed ration of coffee and sugar should be issued—in lieu of which, indeed, any other

* 1129. † 3938. ‡ 1911. § 3723.

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articles in store might be taken.* Porter, of which some 60,000 gallons had reached Constantinople on the 12th of May,† was supplied to all the men who were encamped within reach of water transit, and a cutting was actually made across a neck of land, which separates two lakes near Aladyn, in order to get access to some of the troops.‡ By this means, all but one Division were supplied with beer while the army was at Varna, and the impracticability of sending so bulky an article by land was the only reason why that Division did not share in the general boon. It may be added, that the use of this beverage was only discontinued, by Lord Raglan's directions, on medical grounds.§

Well, then, might the Duke of Newcastle boast that the army which he had sent out, was fed as army had never been fed before. His solicitude on this subject, indeed, did not permit him to abandon it to the departments immediately concerned in attending to it. At one time, we find him urging the Admiralty to send out preserved meats;‖ at another, expressing a fear that salt pork might prove unwholesome for the men;¶ at another, procuring preserved vegetables from France for them.** In short his "indifference" upon this matter, was not greater than the "in-

* 13613.

† 2nd Rep. App. 690. The quantity of porter and ale which had left this country by the 14th of August was 294,678 gallons. Id. ‡ 13635-6. § 13637.

‖ 14542. ¶ App. 3rd Rep. p. 384. ** 14546.

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capacity" which he displayed in the discharge of every other branch of his duties.

The supply of forage was not as satisfactory as that of food. Mr. Filder entered, at an early period, into a contract at Constantinople for the supply of 8,000,000 lbs. of hay, but the contractors failed to perform their agreement, and only 500,000 lbs. were ever obtained from this source.* Barley, also, was procured in the country. But, not to leave the army dependent altogether upon supplies which might prove precarious, large quantities of hay and oats were sent out from England, on board the horse transports.† In a word, forage appears to have been, previously to the invasion of the Crimea, abundant in quantity, but at times irregularly furnished. Chopped straw, however, was procured in abundance, through arrangements entered into with Hussein Bey, a sort of Constantinopolitan Lord Mayor, through whom the Turkish Government obtains its own supplies.‡ While, on the one hand, the most captious censors have not alleged that the animals belonging to the army were materially injured by the occasional want of punctuality in the delivery of their fodder, the officers of the Commissariat do not deny that such irregularities sometimes arose, but they excuse them on the ground that they were inevitable at first, under unusual circumstances, and in a strange country.

* 13525-8. † 13531. ‡ 15608–13.

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The condition of the transport provided for the army was also a subject of complaint. There were at first, as Captain Wrottesley says, speaking of the state of affairs at Gallipoli, "great difficulties felt from want of transport;"* but those difficulties arose partly from the practice which has always prevailed in the British service of depending entirely upon the resources of the country in which the troops are quartered, for the means of transporting them, and partly to the uncertainty which then necessarily hung over the plan of operations.† The Committee are, no doubt, right when they report that "from the first, the system of the land transport was found to be imperfect;" but it is and has always been the British system, and to visit the faults of that system on one or more individuals is not more unjust than it is absurd. Undoubtedly difficulties did arise in a poverty-stricken land from the system of looking to the country for the means of transport, but these difficulties were overcome;‡ and although our Commissariat had the mortification of seeing "the French mule carts trotting off with their supplies," while they had "to labour after our troops with the heavy arabas of the country," which they were obliged to hire, still the delay that occurred from this deficiency, does not appear to have exceeded two or three days.§

The means of transport at the disposal of the army while at Varna, has been the subject of much

* 1625. † 13439-47. ‡ 15595. § 1627.

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misrepresentation. Need we add that Mr. Layard's peculiar talent has been exercised upon it? When, in answer to the accusation which was made in the debate upon Mr. Roebuck's motion, that the army in the Crimea were without the means of transport, Mr. S. Herbert observed that some 5000 animals had been collected in Bulgaria by the Commissariat previous to the expedition, "Would it be believed," demanded the Member for Aylesbury, in a tone of indignation, "that those horses were not calculated "for transport service? They were," he continued, "officers' horses; these were the several thousand "horses which the right honourable gentleman said "the Government had procured at Varna for trans-"port service."* The reader will not be surprised to learn that these few words express what Mr. Layard would call "a tissue of falsehoods."† Mr. Herbert's statement was strictly true, and Mr. Layard's was not correct even in representing the officers' horses as "unfit for transport." His assertion, if it ever had any other foundation than the wish of the moment, could be based upon no better authority than the merest gossip. But it possessed one quality which some politicians cannot resist. It was convenient. It answered the purpose of the moment, and he did not hesitate to hazard it,—taking his chance of subsequent detection and exposure.

The officers' horses, of which he speaks, were purchased by themselves, out of the field allowance

* House of Commons, Jan. 26.

† Letter to the *Times*, of — May, 1855.

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which was given to them at the commencement of hostilities. Six months' field allowance is always issued to each officer when entering on active service,* and with it he is expected to provide himself, according to his rank, with the horse or horses necessary for the carriage of his tent and baggage.† Now, exclusive of these horses, with which, indeed, the Commissariat had nothing whatever to do, and exclusive of those attached to the ambulance corps, there were with the army, before the siege of Silistria was raised, 5659 animals, belonging to the Commissariat.‡ To procure these, Mr. Filder had sent to Malta, Spain, Broussa, Smyrna, and Shumla. He had obtained, besides, 1000 arabas, the common carts of the country, which abound in every village; and when it is borne in mind that the Russians had managed to collect during their operations in the Principalities the almost incredible number of 140,000 of such waggons,§ it is not difficult to believe that the English Commissary's expectation to obtain two or three thousand carts in Bulgaria, on application to Omer Pasha, who had all the resources of the country at his entire disposal, was not ill-founded.‖

* 13663. † 13662-72. ‡ 13677. § 13684.

‖ Third Rep. App. 430.—The authority for this statement is Colonel Simmons, R.E., who is attached to Omer Pasha, and had, at Bucharest, access to the best means of information.—See 3rd Rep., App. 431. It must be borne in mind that these vehicles are made by the peasantry, and are structures of the rudest character.

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There were also "a vast number of ponies" * in the country, which might have been purchased at any moment. But neither ponies nor arabas were needed in large numbers. When, therefore, it is asserted that the army, while at Varna, was not in a condition to enter upon a campaign on the Danube, the assertion is true only in the letter, but not in the spirit. It is probably true that 5500 pack animals would not have sufficed for the conveyance of all the baggage and equipment of the army, but with the aid of 3000 arabas, which might have been obtained at any time, but which were not demanded because they were not needed,—and which would, if procured before they were needed, have involved an useless expense,—the means of transport for such an expedition would have amply sufficed.

But it is unnecessary to dwell further upon the period antecedent to the invasion of the Crimea. It is from the moment that our army touched the enemy's soil, that the interest which its deeds and sufferings have excited, commences. It is from that moment, also, that the late Administration really stands arraigned, and that the imputations upon the different departments at home and abroad assume a grave complexion. Why a Committee, indeed, which was directed to examine into the condition of the army before Sebastopol, should have carried the investigation back to its condition at Gallipoli, Scutari, and Bulgaria, it would now be idle to inquire. The

* 547.

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late Government, at all events, have no reason to complain of a course which gave them an opportunity of disproving many assertions which, however "false and calumnious," remain, characteristically enough, unretracted. But that period of the war now possesses little general interest, and the unauthorized inquiry which the Committee made into it, was regarded as wasting the public time, and exhausting the public patience. Let us hope, at least, that that body did not aim at burying the truth in the formidable mass of Parliamentary tomes which it has issued to the world.

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VI.

THE INVASION.

The manner in which the landing in the Crimea was effected has never been seriously condemned by any reasonable person. Whatever may be said by the few snarlers in and out of Parliament, in whose eyes every thing that is, is wrong, it is allowed by general consent that Mr. Drummond did not over-eulogise the descent when he pronounced it "a well-effected and creditable operation." * Even those who, according to the Member for Surrey, "think that the landing of such an army upon a "hostile shore is as easy a thing as going down to "a white bait dinner at Greenwich," † would be puzzled to find fault with the conduct of the affair. "There was no loss of life, either in the embarka-"tion or disembarkation," says Captain Dacres, who superintended both operations, "during the whole "of it, only one horse was lost." ‡ It has been asserted, that our boats for landing horses and artillery were defective in structure, and insufficient in numbers, and that we were in consequence compelled to resort to the French for aid. According to Captain Dacres, however, our means

* House of Commons, January 26.

† Id. ‡ 16024.

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of disembarkation sufficed, although the surf had damaged some of our boats; and the few French boats which were used, were neither better adapted for the purpose, nor at all needed by us, but were employed "more out of compliment to the French "for having sent them than for any other reason."*

The Committee state, what is the fact beyond dispute, that no Ambulance waggons accompanied the expedition. This statement is unquestionably true; but whose fault was this, if fault there was at all? That of Lord Aberdeen's Government, or of any of the Departments at home? They had already done all that humanity could desire. They had equipped and sent to Turkey an ambulance train, and it was not their province to dictate to their General, how or when it was to be used. That General then, must be to blame, it will be said. No such inference follows, unless it be shewn that the military necessities of his position did not require that he should leave them behind. The example of the French may be cited in proof that no such necessities existed; but this is by no means conclusive of the question. That people have, for more than half a century, always had an Ambulance corps in the train of their armies, and the absence of their mules and cacolets would have been as ominous a novelty to their soldiers in the Crimea, as the presence of Dr. Smith's spring vans would have been an agreeable one to our men. No French General

* 16019—32.

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ventures upon an expedition without his ambulance animals, for no soldier, before going into action, looks about so warily as the French, to ascertain that the surgeon, with all his apparatus, is within reach. But it must further be borne in mind that the English army counted 1100 cavalry*—a force which must have been much smaller if Lord Raglan had taken the ambulance corps on the expedition,—and that while the French were obliged to devote the whole of their navy, numbering some 16 sail of the line, to the transport of their troops, we were obliged to keep our men-of-war cleared for action, in order to be prepared for a naval attack from the Russians.† Far from complaining that we did not imitate the French in carrying our ambulances with us, those who remember how utterly unmolested was the retreat of the enemy from the heights of the Alma, regret rather that our Allies did not follow our example, and give precedence to their dragoons and horses over their mules and litters. Who can believe that if our 1100 cavalry—which Mr. Layard, with his usual disparagement of everything connected with the English army, represents as amounting to "above 200 and under 400"‡—had been reinforced by an equal number of French horse, Menschikoff would have been able quietly to remove his guns and baggage from the field? Had the allied forces but possessed 2000 or 3000 horsemen, Sebastopol would probably have learnt from

* Third Rep. App. 473. † 20488, 9. ‡ 2464.

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the victors the first news of their victory. These speculations are now, perhaps, idle; but when dilettanti warriors, like the member for Aylesbury, indignantly contrast the admirable arrangements of our Allies for the care of their wounded, with our apparent neglect of our men, it is not inopportune to point out the military advantages which might have resulted, had they acted like ourselves. No Englishman can fail to deplore any suffering endured by his countrymen which might have been mitigated, even if it could not have been prevented. But since fight we must, let us hope that the day is yet distant when an English General will be found to peril the safety of an army, or the success of an enterprise, at the suggestion of a false humanity.

It is in the same spirit that the deficiencies of our means of transport along the march have been denounced and exaggerated. "We had no carts whatever brought over from Varna, and the French had," says Mr. Layard. The Committee, more cautious, assert merely that the army landed "without the animals necessary for the conveyance of the baggage," a proposition very true but not very significant, unless it implies a censure on the course adopted of carrying the heavy baggage on board the ships. The land transport employed on the march is accurately stated by Mr. Filder.* "The "means," he says, "that could be appropriated on

* 2536.

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"board the transports for the conveyance of animals "from Varna were necessarily very limited, but we "landed in the Crimea with 70 carts equipped with "mules; and the troops having secured a number "of the waggons of the country, the provisions of the "army were conveyed throughout the march by "means of this transport, the men carrying on their "persons only one day's rations." Besides these carts and waggons, there were 1203 ammunition animals. But they manage these matters so much better in the French service, say those whose indignation at the short-comings of our Departments, springs from jealousy of the imaginary superiority of our Allies. Is this so very clear? "It seems "to be generally supposed," says Mr. Filder, "that "the French army brought with it into the Crimea, "a greater proportion of transport than the English; "but that is not the case. The French landed, "in the first instance, without any transport at "all, with the exception of a part of their ambu- "lance train. The French soldiers carried on their "persons six days' rations, which were replenished "from time to time, at the embouchures of the dif- "ferent rivers that we passed on the march; and for "several days after our arrival before Sevastopol, "they were marched into Balaklava, and carried up "their rations on their backs."*

The march from Old Fort to Sebastopol entailed no great hardship on our troops, notwithstanding

* Third Rep. App. p. 430.

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the want of transport so much complained of. They were without tents, it is true; but the weather, with the exception of the first night, which was very wet, was fine; and General Bentinck, and Sir De Lacy Evans concur in opinion, that the men did not suffer in health, in consequence.* The troops were, according to the Duke of Cambridge, quite as healthy while they slept under the canopy of heaven, as the French who were provided with their little *tentes d'abri.*† Indeed, so little was the want of tents felt by the men, that the few who were provided with them—the Horse Artillery—preferred sleeping in the open air to the trouble of pitching them. "The men had not their tents pitched," says Captain Shakspear, after stating that those articles had been carried on the ammunition waggons; "the "weather was fine, and they did not care for them."‡

The men were abundantly supplied with fresh provisions during the march.§ The officers suffered the unusual, but not unparalleled‖ inconvenience of carrying their effects and provisions. This task, indeed, appears, in General Bentinck's opinion, to have caused the death of one officer; but those who believe that our regimental officers are fit for the duties of a campaign, will probably doubt the sweeping statement which the Member for Aylesbury made in the House, that, in consequence of the burden which they were obliged to carry, "a large number of officers were dead, or

* 1221, 731. † 4122. ‡ 4700. § 1174-5. ‖ 1335.

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unable to serve, by the time the army reached Balaklava,"* especially when they find that his general assertion is wholly unsupported by any evidence taken before the Committee.

* H. of Com. Jan. 26.

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VII.

THE EQUIPMENT.

While the army is on its march from the Alma to Balaklava, let us cast a glance on its military equipment, every part of which has been subjected to criticism and censure.

1. Begin with the men's arms. It has not, indeed, been contended that the Minié rifle, which probably decided the fate of the day at Inkermann, is not an admirable weapon, but it has been said, that our soldiers had not all been armed with them, and that great and unnecessary delays took place in procuring a proper supply. The first assertion rests on the undisputed fact that many of our regiments, and even a detachment of the Guards, as late as last spring, were sent to the seat of war with smooth bores. Lord Hardinge's explanation is this: "For want of target practice," he says, "as to which there is great difficulty "in this free country, I thought it prudent that "the troops should take out the smooth bore, and "that we should send out Minié rifles, at the same "time, as many as we had; and when they arrived "at Malta and Scutari, the practice with those "rifles took place; and it was determined, when they "afterwards took the field, that as many men as "could be armed with the rifle of 1851, should re-

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" ceive it, and the remainder continue to receive the " smooth bore."* But the rifle of 1853, a lighter and more perfect implement, superseded that of 1851, and as fast as they could be manufactured they were sent to Balaklava, where they were distributed to the various regiments as they arrived.† But why were they manufactured so slowly, it is asked. "After perusing the evidence," says the Committee, " it will excite no surprise to find that the " arrangements attempted by this (the Ordnance) " Office, in reference to warm clothing, huts, and " Minié rifles, were imperfect and dilatory." After perusing such an assertion, indeed, every person who has attended to the evidence, will distrust his memory, and if he be desirous to ascertain the truth will turn again to the blue books. Now, what says the Duke of Newcastle upon this very subject? " No delay took place in the contracts that I am " aware of. Great delay took place in the execu- " tion of the contracts."‡ " I certainly found," he adds, " so great a delay in executing the contracts " made at Birmingham, that I felt it to be my duty " to ensure a more rapid supply of that arm; and " for that purpose I entered into a contract at Liege, " for a supply of 20,000 Minié rifles. I received " great remonstrances upon that account, no doubt; " but I believed it to be absolutely necessary, and so " clearly did I consider it justifiable, that upon hear- " ing afterwards that there was some further delay

* 20651. † 20654. ‡ 15305.

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"at Birmingham, I repeated my determination not "to suffer these delays to occur, and I instantly "ordered another contract for 20,000 at Liege." * And the effect of this contract it may be mentioned by the way, was to prevent the execution of an order given by the Russian Government for 100,000 muskets.†

Is the Duke's evidence contradicted? The Members for Birmingham and North-Warwickshire, it is true, had complained in the House that their constituents had not received the patterns of their work in proper time, but according to the Comptroller of the Board of Ordnance, no delay ever arose except such as might have been interposed by some changes which the Committee of Small Arms might have suggested.‡ That a delay arose in the execution of the Birmingham contracts is admitted; but while, on the one side, the Ordnance Officer charged with this branch of the service, denies that the delay was attributable to the Board, it is somewhat remarkable that no gentleman from Birmingham or Warwickshire appeared before the Committee to substantiate the charge brought against that Department, and victoriously establish the superiority of individual enterprise over official routine.

2. It is said that the army was not properly equipped for a siege. That our siege guns were not provided with horses, is one cause of Mr. Layard's

* 15306. † 18710. ‡ 18706.

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dissatisfaction.* Poor Mr. Layard! What malicious bombardier, or vengeful aristocrat sold him this bargain? It is surprising that he was not induced by the same insidious counsellors to denounce the scandalous neglect of the Admiralty to provide chargers for Admiral Dundas' famous horse marines. Everybody who knows anything of artillery, knows that siege-guns are no more provided with horses, than the "jollies" themselves. Even position artillery, or guns of a heavy calibre which are brought into the field for occupying points of strategic importance, are never horsed, though they need the means of locomotion more frequently than battering guns. And the reason is equally obvious in both cases. Siege guns are not intended for manœuvring, and therefore are not equipped for manœuvring. Armies have field pieces for that purpose, good Mr. Layard; and when a siege gun does want a lift, just to get into position, it procures horses for the nonce, from the resources of the country, or from the horse artillery. At Sebastopol the field artillery was not in use, and the light pieces lent their horses to the more ponderous members of their family. But why did this critic stop short at siege guns? Why did he not include ships' guns in his demand for horses? Many of them are much larger and heavier than any of your shore-going pieces, and they are constantly used

* 14948, 18080.

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in attacks of strong places. Surely the guns of the sailors' battery before Sebastopol have a good grievance on this score, for we will venture to say, that the vessels from which they were taken, were not supplied with even as much as a donkey for their transport. Why did not the honourable Gentleman cross-examine Sir James Graham on the point when he had him before the Committee? He would certainly have made as strong a case against him as he did against the Lieutenant-General of the Ordnance. And yet Mr. Layard aspires to be Under-Secretary for War! And this he would call "putting the right man in the right place!"

3. But not only was our siege train sent forth horseless, the pieces themselves were of the most trumpery character. "The mortars available," Mr. Layard told the House in January last,* "were of very "small calibre, and there were no siege guns of any "size—those at hand being merely calculated for a "campaign in Bulgaria, in besieging such places as "the Russians might have taken."

It is not necessary to discuss whether mortars and guns of small calibre would suffice for besieging such paltry fortresses as Shumla, Silistria, or Rutschuk, for the preparations of our Government were far more formidable than Mr. Layard represented. Two complete siege trains formed part of the equipment of the army on the invasion of the

* House of Commons, Jan. 26.

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Crimea.* One of them was at Varna when our troops were there, and hence, perhaps, the idea that the artillery before Sebastopol was "merely calculated for a campaign in Bulgaria." Each train consisted of 40 pieces—that is, 10 eight-inch guns, 15 twenty-four pounders, 5 ten-inch, and 10 5½-inch mortars.† Four of the 8-inch guns in the first train were Lancasters. Of these 80 pieces, 60 were in position on the 17th of October, of which, thirty were 24-pounders, sixteen were 8-inch guns, and ten were 10-inch mortars. Mr. Layard's assertions are inexcusable. It is not, indeed, in an attorney's office that a very accurate or extensive acquaintance with artillery is generally acquired; but a gentleman who thinks that the under-secretaryship of the War Department is his right place, should know something more of big guns than is expected of a lawyer's clerk. And he has had the opportunity of improving his mind on the subject, for he passed, by his own shewing, some time before Sebastopol with one of our most distinguished artillery officers, Lt.-Colonel Dickson. Nevertheless, he has yet to learn, it would seem, that 24-pounders are the largest breaching guns that are commonly employed in sieges, and that the use of the huge guns which throw 8-inch shells and solid shot of 68 lbs. is a novelty in the attack of strong places. As to our mortars being of "very small calibre," the critic who

* 14946. † 4th Rep. App. p. 315.

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hazarded the assertion either did not know what their size was, or, if he did, had not yet discovered that 10-inch mortars are the largest in common use in sieges, and for the simple reason that that size has been found in practice the most profitable. The loss of time, and increased difficulty and expense incurred in working larger guns, are not adequately compensated by the increase of power gained by them. Except under very special circumstances, it is found that a given amount of metal can be brought to the trenches and thrown into the place with more rapidity and effect in the shape of 10-inch shells than in that of a higher calibre. It is true larger sizes have been used before towns. At Cadiz, prodigious mortars were employed, and at the siege of Antwerp, in 1832, a 20-inch one was brought up by the French, but it burst after a few discharges, and the experiment has not been repeated. The 10-inch mortars are more easily and rapidly worked than 13-inch mortars, and there is hardly a difference of a couple of hundred yards in their range. However, the army was soon supplied with some of the larger pieces also; eleven mortars of the 13-inch calibre were forwarded to our army from Malta, and threw "Whistling Dicks" among the "Moscovs." It is but right to add that two other siege trains were subsequently sent out, consisting altogether of twenty-eight 8-inch guns, forty 32-pounders, ten 24-pounders, twenty-five 10-inch and ten 5½-inch mortars, making a total of 204 siege guns sent to

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Sebastopol.* Besides these, a number of ship's guns are to be reckoned.

But to obtain an accurate view of the means provided for offensive operations against the place, it is necessary to add to the siege train, strictly so called, the position ordnance which was sent out with the army, and the greater part of which was, of course, available for battering purposes. This consisted of sixty-two pieces, of which—

10 were thirty-two pounders.
10 were eighteen pounders.
10 were twelve-pounders.
10 were eight-inch howitzers.
10 were thirty-two pounder howitzers (brass.)
12 were $4\frac{2}{5}$ mortars.

And if the reader will now bear in mind that the English army was not the only besieging force before Sebastopol, he will be in a position to determine how far the late Government was justly chargeable with having supplied the army with no siege guns of any size, and with mortars of very small calibre.

4. But not only were our siege guns few and small, "there were only so many rounds of ammu-"nition sent out as, at the common rate of firing, "would be exhausted in a day."†

It may be thought singular that Mr. Layard should have made no attempt to establish this

* Fourth Rep. App. p. 315.

† Layard, H. of Com. Jan. 26.

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charge before the Committee; but the answer which his representations respecting the battering artillery received, probably damped the ardour of his curiosity. No inquiry was made, and no evidence sought upon this important topic. It is a *casus omissus* in the blue books. The Committee was too busily engaged in collecting rumours against Admiral Boxer, and reports against Captain Christie—it was too deeply immersed in Mr. Stafford's horrors, and Mr. Osborne's exploits, to turn attention to so paltry a question as whether the army which had been sent to fight, had been supplied with the means of fighting. But, as the reader may perhaps like to know something upon the subject, he will be thankful for the following figures, especially as they will not only gratify his desire for information on a point which the Committee has neglected, but will serve as a test at once of the veracity of Mr. Layard, and of the incapacity of the late Administration. The following table shows the quantity of ammunition which was sent with the siege trains, and the reserve store which followed in September—

			Reserve.					
	Round shot.	Shell.	Round shot.	Shell.	Total per piece.	No. of pieces.		Total rounds.
Each 24-pounder . . .	545	10	440	10	= 1005	× 30	=	30,150
Each 8-inch gun in 1st train	775	25	101	163	= 1064	× 6	=	6,384
Each 8-inch gun in 2d train	575	—	101	163	= 839	× 10	=	8,390
Each 10-inch mortar . .	—	325	—	213	= 338	× 10	=	5,380
Each 5½-inch mortar . .	—	100	—	200	= 300	× 20	=	6,000
Each Lancaster	—	100	—	—	= 100	× 4	=	400
Each round including 50 projectiles								
					Total amm. siege train	80	=	56,704

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The ammunition of the position ordnance was as follows—

	Round shot.	Shells.	Grape.	Case.	Total.		No. of guns.		Total rounds.
Each gun had . .	800	—	100	100 =	1000	×	30	=	30,000
Each howitzer . .	—	800	100	100 =	1000	×	20	=	20,000
Each 4 2-5ths mortar	360	—	—	— =	360	×	12	=	4,320
				Total amm. position Ordnance					54,320
				Total rounds amm. of both					111,024

It thus appears that our battering guns had about 1000 rounds a-piece; and it is well known that guns cannot be trusted to throw a much greater number. Even after half that number of shots, the bouche begins to droop, and the base of the cone which it forms, becomes wider and wider at every successive discharge, entailing waste of powder, diminished power, and increasing inaccuracy of fire. Even if the reserve store had never reached its destination, the supply of ammunition sent out would have afforded no pretext for Mr. Layard's statement, that at the common rate of firing the whole would have been expended in a day. Has this gentleman the faintest notion of what is the common rate of firing? "Avec les canons de siége placés dans les embrasures," says Piobert, in his *Traité d'Artillerie theorique et pratique*,* "on peut tirer de douze à quinze coups par heure." This is probably the ordinary rate of firing; and it is quite as active work as is consistent with mercy, not to the gunners merely, but to the guns. This, however, if the firing is kept up for ten hours

* p. 193, 3rd ed. Paris, 1852.

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daily, would dispose of only from 120 to 150 rounds a day. But even at the most rapid rate of firing on record, viz., at St. Sebastian, where, in total disregard of both men and pieces, our army fired, from ten guns, 25 shots per hour for 15½ hours, Mr. Layard would find it difficult to dispose of the first ammunition of the siege trains in a single day. It is obvious that he knew nothing of the subject on which he so confidently spoke, except what he had learned from the chit-chat of the camp or the city; but he aimed at passing for a great authority in all military matters, and to attain that end, even for a brief period, he did not hesitate to exert those vast powers of ready assertion which he possesses, to a degree happily unexampled hitherto in this country.

Before dismissing this subject, it may not be superfluous to state that the Field Artillery consisted of 44 9-pounder and 8 6-pounder guns, with 22 24-pounders, and 4 12-pounder howitzers, supplied with about 44,700 rounds; and in answer to Mr. Roebuck's assertion that our men were "without ammunition," to add that some 15,000,000 or 16,000,000 rounds of small arms ammunition were sent out to them before September.

5. As to the quality of the intrenching and pioneers' tools served out to the troops, it is difficult to form a satisfactory opinion. For the former the Ordnance are responsible; for the latter the Colonels of regiments. Several investigations were made

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into the subject, and the result of them has been summed up by the Duke of Newcastle with perhaps more than just severity, against the Board of Ordnance. The alleged defects in the articles in question were, it appears, brought under his notice, for the first time, in May 1854. "It was," he says, "a letter from a connexion, I believe, of one of the "officers with the army; and I looked upon it as "so very important a matter, that I immediately "wrote to the Ordnance, and desired them to make "a thorough investigation of this complaint, and re-"port to me. They reported at considerable length, "in a manner which I did not think satisfactory; "and, in order to test the accuracy of that report, "I sent it off to Lord Raglan, with a desire that he "would call for an investigation of the facts, and "inform me whether there was any truth in the "charge. Lord Raglan did send me a very care-"fully drawn up report, from various officers, in "which the fact was thoroughly substantiated, that "many of the tools supplied were of a very inferior "description. I then again applied to the Ordnance "for an explanation; and this explanation I did not "think was altogether satisfactory; but it was this: "that those that were of an inferior character must "have been supplied from the out-port depôts, "which had been of a very antique description, and "not those which had been approved at Chobham. "I, of course, replied to the Ordnance, that I con-"sidered it very reprehensible; and I desired that

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"every tool of that description should be immediately "got rid of, in order that the out-port depôts might "be supplied with tools of the very best description."* The military witnesses, also, who were examined before the Committee, generally concurred in condemning the tools.

On the other hand, Sir Thomas Hastings, the Comptroller of the Board, deliberately expresses his belief, notwithstanding this testimony, "that a very large proportion of them were thoroughly good tools,"† and he inclines to lay the blame on the workmen rather than on their implements. In support of this view, he mentions an instance which came under his own immediate observation, of tools having been returned into store as bad, which afterwards "went through the whole test without losing the smallest degree of steel,"‡—a test, too, of so severe a character that many tool makers in the manufacturing districts decline to accept the orders of the Board.§ The truth upon the subject probably is, that while some of the implements were bad in quality, others were wrongly condemned merely because they did not resist the bad usage to which they were subjected in awkward hands.

This, however, is mere conjecture. The report of the Committee shows, that that body was unable to decide the question. After stating the difference of opinion between the officers examined, and Sir Thos. Hastings, they merely assert that "there

* 15071. † 85161. ‡ 18498. § 18521.

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"is no doubt that upon previous occasions, as well "as in the present campaign, these articles of field "equipment have been condemned"—an assertion which nobody ever dreamed of disputing—but which does not affect either "the condition of the army before Sebastopol," or the conduct of the departments who had to minister to its wants. The question which the Committee had to decide, was not whether the tools had been in fact condemned, but whether they had been rightly condemned by those who disapproved of them; and neither their assertion of the expediency of "placing in the hands of the soldiers the very best "articles that can be provided," nor the sententious dictum that "the supply of inferior tools must "be ascribed to carelessness or dishonesty on the "part of the persons responsible for the supply," can conceal the fact that on this point they have failed to arrive at the truth.

Whether the complaints, however, were well or ill founded, whether the defects were exaggerated or under-stated, it is clear that this question affords little pretext for the charge of negligence on the part of the Minister. He immediately instituted an inquiry. A Committee was appointed, consisting of General Jones, General Torrens and Mr. Stacey, the Ordnance Storekeeper at the Tower, to examine the patterns and specifications;* and effectual steps were taken to ensure the supply to our men of the most efficient implements.

* 18527.

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VIII.

CABINET COUNCILS—PROVISIONS FROM HOME.

True, it may be said, there has been a vast deal of exaggeration and hard lying respecting the condition of the army; but surely it cannot be denied that our poor men, although not exactly without ammunition, or without arms or intrenching tools, were, in Mr. Roebuck's language, "without food, without clothing, and without shelter." Assuredly, no man of right feeling can think of the hardships endured by the troops without the deepest sympathy for their sufferings, and the highest admiration for the heroic courage with which they faced and bore them. But these feelings disgrace instead of honouring those who, under their influence, lose sight of the truth, or disfigure it for the purpose of fastening the evils they lament upon a scapegoat. The men did unquestionably suffer much, and they endured their sufferings with fortitude. But when a Committee of the House of Commons asserts, that that fortitude was "unsurpassed in the annals of war," it is to be hoped, for the sake of truth, that they did not intend to create the belief that their sufferings were unsurpassed also, and that the winter siege of Sebastopol is to be ranked in the history of war's horrors with the Moscow or even the Burgos retreat. The men were not as well fed, as well clad, as well housed, or as well doctored

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as we all would have wished them. But, in the name of common sense, let us inquire calmly what their real condition was in these respects. Let us be guided by truth, and not by rhetoric—even though it come all the way from Sheffield; by facts, and not by fiction—even though it be brought to us from Aylesbury.

Let us see, in the first place, what the Government at home did for the purpose of supplying the army with food, clothes, and shelter. But wait a moment. Friend Snarl has something to say at this stage of affairs. "Talk of the acts of Ministers," he exclaims, "why it is a notorious and a scandalous fact, that they were all shooting in the Highlands, while our brave soldiers were fighting and bleeding for their country." "Not a Cabinet Council," chimes in Snap, "was held between the prorogation of Parliament and the month of October." "The Queen herself," ominously observes Growl to Mrs. Grundy, "was not in London at any time in September."

There is much truth in these assertions, beyond doubt. It may be said, indeed, that the Secretary for War sat nailed to his desk during the whole autumn, in Downing Street;* that the Secretary at War was absent from town for only two weeks between March and January;† that the First Lord of the Admiralty, also, never found a moment's time,

* Speech of the Duke of Newcastle, Feb. 1, London, 1855, p. 25.

† 20079.

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while in office, to visit his property in Cumberland, and never was absent from town except to attend upon the Queen;* and that the Premier was in town during the whole of September, and during the rest of the year as well, with the exception of one week which he passed in attendance on the Queen at Balmoral, and another at home.† But where, it is triumphantly retorted, were the other members of the Administration? Where was the Lord Privy Seal, and where the Postmaster-General? Where was the First Commissioner of Woods and Forests, and where the Lord Chancellor? They were not in Downing Street, nor at St. Martin's-le-Grand, neither were they to be heard of in Whitehall Place, nor yet in Lincoln's Inn. A full Cabinet Council could not have been called together in less than twenty-four hours.‡ It is vain to deny it.

But was a Cabinet Council needed in August or September any more than a Session of Parliament, or a Convention? The members of the Committee must have been sorely puzzled to find something for the conclave to do at so unusual a period, when they could discover no more pressing subject for its deliberations than the "repair of omissions," which Lord J. Russell, in his correspondence with Lord Aberdeen, imputed to the Duke of Newcastle, but which alleged omissions, unluckily for the Com-

* 21241. † 21300. ‡ 20089.

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mittee, did not take place until October! * But they do not insinuate, much less assert, that the course of events could have been mended or marred by the Cabinet even if it had met on every one of the thirty very long days which September has in London. They had completed their preparations. They had given the necessary directions. The time for counsel was past. The die had been cast. The army had been ordered to the Crimea, and Ministers could do no more than await the execution of their orders. They could only watch events, wait for news, and be prepared for all contingencies. But it would have been in better taste, it would have "looked better," if they had waited and watched in a body and in the capital, says Growl, appealing again to Mrs. Grundy. To please the old lady, indeed, Her Majesty also should have been of the party, and have sat at the head of the Council table, while grave Ministers of State and Privy Councillors twirled their thumbs in weary expectation of the first tingle of the telegraph bell. But, happily for the country, Lord Aberdeen and his colleagues turned their thoughts to more important matters than speculations on what Mrs. Grundy might think or say.

The army, it appears, did not start without a good store of provisions. It was accompanied, on leaving Varna, with 2,196,547 lbs. of biscuit, 448,136 lbs. of salt beef, 330,200 lbs. of salt pork, 272,322 lbs.

* See the Correspondence, 4th Rep. App. 355.

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of sugar, 193,393 lbs. of rice, 130,080 lbs. of coffee, 15,029 lbs. of tea, 31,317 lbs. of Scotch barley, 29,228 gallons of rum, and 55,000 gallons of porter.* But why, it was asked by a member of the Committee of the Duke of Newcastle, were salt pork and salt beef selected as the principal articles of food? They were merely a reserve store; and if salt meat and not preserved meat was sent, it was partly because the Admiralty were apprehensive of a repetition of the "disgraceful tricks which had been played "upon them before." † The Duke of Newcastle says he was "very anxious indeed to have supplied the "army with preserved meats which had been intro- "duced by Mr. Goldner," and that he had "urged it "upon the Admiralty."‡ But the flesh of the hog is unwholesome, and even prohibited by religion in warm climates, says Mr. Layard,§ insinuating consequently that it was through ignorance of this recondite piece of learning that salt pork was given to our army in the depth of winter. The subject, however, had not escaped the attention of the Duke of Newcastle. On the 7th of September, observing that a larger supply of pork than of beef had been ordered for the army, he wrote to the Treasury to inquire whether it was true that that meat had been found unwholesome by the troops.‖ "I have con- "sulted the principal medical officers," answered Mr. Filder on the 30th of the same month, "and they

* 3rd Rep. App. p. 383. † 14542. ‡ Id.
§ 555-7. ‖ 3rd Rep. App. p. 384.

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"are of opinion there is nothing deleterious in the "use of salt pork in this climate, and consider it in "every respect a better ration for the troops than salt "beef."*

The Treasury, backed by the Victualling department, took care that the Commissariat stocks should not run low. "Up to December," when the Commissariat was transferred to the War Department, "we were ahead of the Commissary-General in "regard to the Commissariat supplies," says Sir C. Trevelyan.† Not only was the supply of the ordinary rations—salt pork, salt beef, biscuit, and rum kept up, but coffee, tea, rice, and sugar were sent out. The following table shews the quantities shipped to the East from the 1st September to the end of December:—

Biscuit	3,710,360 lbs.	Boiled Mutton	2,016 lbs.
Rum	125,570 gals.	Sago	4,940 lbs.
Salt Beef	1,555,984 lbs.	Arrowroot	4,812 lbs.
Salt Pork	1,326,464 lbs.	Oatmeal	320 galls.
Coffee (raw)	140,474 lbs.	Concentrated Milk	1,679 pints
Do. (roasted whole)	96,420 lbs.	Chocolate Paste	1,679 pints
Sugar	409,112 lbs.	Scotch Barley	55,452 lbs.
Rice	348,960 lbs.	Potatoes (preserved)	43,348 lbs.
Tea	1,244 lbs.	Do. (dried)	10,080 lbs.
Port Wine	1,800 doz.	Lemon Juice	39,996 lbs.
Brandy	663 galls.	Hay	2,146,843 lbs.‡
Essence of Beef	13,440 ¼ pints		

* 3rd Rep. App. p. 384. † 13658. ‡ 3rd Rep. App. 459.

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In the presence of such facts, the Committee could hardly report otherwise than that "the Commissa-" riat Department obtained an abundant supply of " salt meat, biscuit, and rum, from England." The supply of vegetables had not been forgotten. "Early in the year," says Sir C. Trevelyan, "before the potato crop was ripe, I made inqui-" ries here and at Trieste, as to the practicability " of sending supplies of potatoes to the hospitals " at Scutari, and to the army in the Crimea, and " the result of the information which I received " was that there was a regular trade in potatoes be-" tween the Adriatic and the Levant, and that it " would be advisable to send them from Trieste, as " they ripened there sooner, and were nearer to the " places where they were wanted, and we sent suc-" cessive shipments, first by Lloyd's steamers, and " afterwards by a sailing vessel; and after that, the " Duke of Newcastle ordered a separate cargo from " Venice, and I also wrote to Commissary-General " Filder to ask what prospect there was of obtaining " potatoes in the Crimea, and I have his answer."*

The quality of the salt provisions, it may be observed in passing, was unexceptionable. Mr. George Dundas, M.P. for Linlithgow, describes the salt pork and salt beef as being "as good as he ever tasted."† The biscuit also was "very good,"‡ according to the same authority; and the Commissariat rum was famed for its excellence.

* 13792. † 313. ‡ 314.

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One commodity, however, was the subject of complaint in the camp—the green coffee. Torrents of indignation, scorn and derision have been poured upon all those who were believed to have been parties to the crime of issuing the coffee in that condition; but in this, as in too many other cases, the public has proved but too ready to strike without hearing. It had always been usual with armies in the field to provide coffee in an unroasted state, and to leave the troops to roast it.* During the Kafir war, the berry was issued green, and no complaint was made by the men that the Commissariat did not roast it for them. They preferred it, according to Commissiary-General Miller, in the condition in which it was delivered to them, to chocolate, which admitted of much simpler preparation.† "My servant," writes a military officer, "used to tell me that it was better to carry it unroasted, because if roasted it was apt to crumble, "and some would be wasted; whereas in its raw "state, wet from rain even would not injure it."‡ There is another obvious advantage in keeping the coffee green. The roasted berry quickly loses its flavour; and, with the aroma, the chief chemical virtue goes. No remonstrance was heard upon this subject in Bulgaria, nor even at Sebastopol, as long as fuel was easily procurable. "We took," says Sir C. Trevelyan, "all the pains in our power to "ascertain, in this country, whether it would be

* 13625. † App. 3rd Rep. 355. ‡ App. 3rd Rep. 355.

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"better that the coffee should be sent out roasted "or unroasted; and finding that it was furnished "unroasted to the French army, and that it had been "furnished unroasted to the troops throughout the "last Kafir war, it was considered advisable to send "it in an unroasted state. But still, to make as- "surance doubly sure, we sent out a small quantity "in a roasted state, as an experiment. Afterwards, "when we found that the troops had a difficulty in "roasting it in the Crimea, owing to the want of "fuel, and to their state of over-work and exhaustion, "then we ordered it to be sent out roasted."* Mr. Filder himself was one of the first persons who called attention to the subject. "Although," he writes on the 13th of November, "there is a suffi- "cient supply of coffee in store, I would beg to "suggest that, during the present season, and in "consideration of the scarcity of fuel wood, roasted "coffee should continue to be sent out from England, "as requested in my letter of the 18th of October, "and the unroasted coffee in depôt be reserved for "consumption during the summer."† But Sir C. Trevelyan had anticipated his wishes. As early as July, 5000 lbs. of roasted coffee were sent out,‡—apparently the experiment above referred to,—and the last time that unroasted coffee was sent, was on the 4th day of October.§ But why send to England for roasted coffee, when it might have been procured in any quantity at Constantinople? Because, says

* 13627. † App. 3rd Rep. 393. ‡ 17785. § 17790.

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Mr. Filder, "it comes out from England in air-"tight casks, whilst at Constantinople we have "never yet been able to get any but the roughest, "rudest and most defective packages."* The Committee may scorn these considerations, and condemn them as mere "ingenious arguments;" but supercilious contempt springs quite as often from ignorance as from superiority. Are these gentlemen really aware of the chemical properties which the despised aroma represents? Chemists have ascertained that coffee possesses the remarkable quality of retarding the progress of that decay which the body unceasingly undergoes. And this virtue lies, in a great measure, in the volatile oil which gives the berry its aroma. "The effect of this volatile "oil of coffee," says Mr. Johnston, in his admirable little work on the Chemistry of Common Life, "upon the system, has been made the subject of "direct experiment. When roasted coffee is dis-"tilled with water, this oil passes over, and by "drinking the distilled water and oil together, its "effect may be ascertained. Julius Lehmann found "in this way that it has an effect in retarding the "waste of the tissues quite equal to that of caffeine "itself."† This effect may appear unimportant to those gentlemen of England who sit at home at ease, but to the poor men whose frames were subject to more than ordinary wear and tear in the trenches, the presence of this oily constituent was, on this

* 13697. † Vol. I. p. 206.

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account—even if its "powerful influence upon the animal economy, exciting to greater activity both the vascular and nervous systems,"* be disregarded —of the last importance; and they will hardly appreciate the lofty philosophy of the Committee which sneers at well meant efforts to secure this admirable preservative property—this virtue—in their beverage. Unquestionably coffee in a roasted state became a great boon to the soldier in the Crimea, when fuel grew scarce, or rather the leisure for procuring it became short; but when the public mind shall have sufficiently recovered from its excitement to weigh facts dispassionately, it will probably feel that the "green coffee case" is no very great evidence either of the incapacity or of the indifference of our public functionaries. The French army, whose administration is always appealed to in disparaging comparison with our own departments, fared in this respect much in the same manner as our own. The berry was sent green from France, and issued green to the men in the Crimea as everywhere else, until fuel became scanty. Then the Intendance, instead of importing it roasted, like our Commissariat, roasted it themselves at Kamiesch.

* Id. p. 207.

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IX.

CLOTHING.

Next in importance to feeding the army, stands the question of clothing it. As to the ordinary dress of the men, it is unnecessary to discuss the subject. Some people prefer blue, green, grey and every other colour to red. Some prefer frock coats to tails, and some the French *Képi*, or straight-peaked forage cap, to either shako or bear-skin. The ordinary clothing of our men, when they started for the Crimea, was neither better nor worse than the ordinary clothing of the rest of the army. It was only "getting indifferent," in November, according to Sir De Lacy Evans, who says that he had "no particular difficulties about clothing while he was in the Crimea;"* but as the wear and tear of thecampaign was likely to destroy the clothing before its allotted period, the Duke of Newcastle sent a third suit of ordinary clothing, which was supplied to the men without deductions.† The only articles of dress which have been complained of, are the great coat and the ammunition boot. The former was certainly too light and scanty, but it was made so with the view of diminishing the burden on the soldier's back. The common boot was said to have been made of bad materials and of insufficient size. This accusation affects the colonels of regiments, or

* 1459. † 14736.

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perhaps more justly, the contractors, but certainly not any Government department; and although exaggeration has perhaps magnified the defects complained of, it is certain that the boots were neither as strongly made nor as large as they ought to have been. The smallness of size, however, was their chief defect, and was the chief cause of their rapid destruction. But it would be a mistake to suppose that they were unusually small. They were of the ordinary sizes, according to the size-roll,* which has been in use for the last fifty years,† and if it was found frequently too small in the camp, the reason was, probably, that the socks which were sent out at a later period, were of unusual thickness. But there was also another reason. The men for the first time consulted comfort, and having "left the girls behind them," ceased to care for that great object of garrison ambition, the encasement of the flattest of feet within boots of the narrowest compass; and the demand for large boots became more than usually great. The ordinary ammunition boots supplied by the colonels of regiments, however, must not be confounded with those which were sent out by the Ordnance. The latter, Mr. Sidney Herbert assured the Committee, were large, and "I say it with "some confidence," he proceeded to state, "because "I was constantly at the Ordnance, urging and "hastening those proceedings. I always had the "pattern of everything to be sent out, sent to me.

* 18615. † 18624.

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"There were some long boots for the Cavalry, "coming up over the thigh, and some boots coming "to the knee for the Infantry; and I am convinced "that they were large enough, for I tested it in this "way: I sent down my compliments to the officer "of the Guard to send me up one of the stoutest "men he had, he being a grenadier, and I made "him try the boots on; and I imagine if a guards-"man of considerable size and height could be com-"fortable and easy in them, they would be quite "large enough, even with two or three pairs of "stockings, for a small man."*

But the solicitude of the Home Authorities for the comfort of the troops did not rest here. On the 13th of April, Dr. A. Smith, one of the "best abused" of our functionaries, wrote to Lord Hardinge recommending the substitution, during the summer, of a loose garment of light material, in lieu of the tightly buttoning red coat; the adoption of some head dress which would not, like the black felt of the Line, or the bear-skin of the Guards, accumulate heat; the discontinuance of the stock, and the addition of one or two flannel waistcoats, and as many flannel drawers and worsted stockings to the soldiers' kit.† The last recommendation was rejected, simply because the men could not have carried the additional articles.‡ A white canvas frock or blouse, however, was issued to the men in the summer, and the linen cover for the head-dress was borrowed from the

* 20016. † 2nd Rep. App. 695-6. ‡ 20813.

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Indian army.* The stock, also, was discarded, and so was the razor; but innovations so subversive of all military notions of *tenue*, would probably not have been effected unless the influence of the Minister for War had been brought to bear on the Horse-Guards.†

Winter clothing, however, was not forgotten, any more than the summer dress of the men. As early as June—long before it was imagined that the allied armies were destined to pass the winter half-way between Balaklava and Sebastopol—the Duke of Newcastle directed that a quantity of blankets, rugs, and warm under clothing should be prepared for the use of the troops. The formal requisition is dated the 5th of July, and requires the Ordnance to provide "150,000 worsted socks, 90,000 woollen frocks, and 50,000 flannel drawers." On the 2nd of July, an application was made to contractors for the supply of 100,000 pairs of socks, and 90,000 woollen frocks. These were delivered at the Tower on the 2nd of August, and on the 7th, the Ordnance applied to the Admiralty for tonnage to carry them to the seat of war.‡ These dates will show how far the vague insinuation of the Committee that the supply of warm clothing was delayed by the "unseemly conduct" of the members of the Board of Ordnance was well founded. The demand, in truth, was not pressing, and, consequently, the Ordnance did not, in making their requisition to

* 20807. † 14668. ‡ 4th Rep. App. 318.

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the Admiralty for tonnage, represent their demands as urgent. The army was still at Varna, within a three weeks' voyage, and the Admiralty reasonably considered that a good battering train and plenty of ammunition would be more acceptable presents, on the eve of the expedition, than clothing, which could not be required until November. It was not until the month of October that the first shipment of these goods took place. On the 18th of that month, the "Prince" sailed for Balaklava with 2,500 watch coats, 16,000 blankets, 3,700 rugs, 53,000 woollen frocks, 17,000 lambs' wool drawers, and 35 700 socks; she had also 12,880 pairs of boots, and 1,800 pairs of shoes on board.* The ill-fated steamer arrived at her destination on the 8th of November—in ample time to admit of the distribution of the goods among the men before the wet weather set in; and if she had not been lost, it is probable that not a word would ever have been heard about the delay which occurred in sending out the warm clothing. The "Jura" left England for the same place on the 21st of October, with 4,100 blankets, 7,975 rugs, 21,800 woollen frocks, 18,500 lambs' wool drawers, and 16,200 socks,† but her voyage was an unaccountably long one. She did not reach the Crimea till the 21st of November. She was soon followed by the "Ottowa," the "Cleopatra," and the "Brandon," and subsequently by the "Holyrood," the "Metropolitan," and the

* 18244, and App. 4th Rep. p. 318. † 18309.

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"Manilla," all carrying further contributions of warm clothing. On the morning on which the news of the loss of the "Prince" reached the Duke of Newcastle by telegraph, agents were despatched, by his direction, to the manufacturing districts, to purchase up warm clothing similar to that which had been lost; and so rapidly was the order executed, that the new goods were in London ready for shipment, by the time that the post had brought the particulars of the disaster, and were shipped for the Crimea within a day or two afterwards.* It will perhaps be remembered, that Mr. Layard, in that tissue of confident but unfounded assertions with which he favoured the House on the discussion of Mr. Roebuck's motion, stated that "in point of fact, the 'Prince' had not on board "what was strictly called winter clothing, but she "had on board such clothing as the troops might "have put on any day of the year. . . . All "that was on board being a certain number of shirts "and stockings and other articles, which would "have been given out to the soldiers in England "or any other place." The assertion, it is now seen, was not more fortunate than any others of the honourable member's numerous statements.

In the course of the same month, the following articles of dress were also ordered:—

25,000 fur caps.
8,000 seal-skin boots.

* 14508.

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15,000 pairs brown leather boots.
40,000 waterproof capes.
40,000 fur coats.
1,500 paletôts.
12,000 seal-skin mitts.
40,000 leggings.
10,000 flannel shirts.
30,000 cholera belts.
10,000 warm gloves.*

And as early as the 24th of October, 30,000 pairs of gloves had also been ordered.

This statement, however, by no means represents the whole of the extra clothing provided for the army. The equipment of the Artillerymen, who were sent to the East in December last, and which exceeds in completeness and comfort any dress that soldier ever wore, is not included in it. The following list shows what provision was made for that corps :—

6,666 Fur caps.
6,666 Mitts.
6,666 Gauntlets.
6,666 Long boots.
6,666 Long stockings.
1,333 Waistcoats, chamois leather.
1,333 Waterproof capes.
4,500 Overstockings.

* 4th Rep. App. 318.

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2,000	Waistcoats, chamois.
4,500	Guernseys.
2,500	Waistcoats.
300	Pairs gloves, gauntlets.
4,500	Muffitees.
4,000	Night caps.
45,000	Jackets, working.
4,500	Sheets.
100	Long boots.
120	Leather boots.
600	Goloshes.
600	Leggings.
1,300	Pilot coats (lined).
2,000	Overcoats.
4,500	Strap coats.
40	Cwt. dubbing.*

The precise time when these articles reached the men has not been shewn, but according to Captain Shakespear, each of his non-commissioned officers and men received, early in November, a pair of boots, a Jersey shirt, and a forage cap. In December, each non-commissioned officer and man received a new full dress jacket, an undress jacket, a pair of trowsers, a pair of boots, and a pair of gloves,—all extra clothing. In the first week in January, each received a water-proof coat, Cording's coat; and at the end of January a fur cap, a woollen comforter, two Jersey shirts, a chamois leather

* 4th Rep. App. 319.

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waistcoat, a pilot-cloth coat, two pairs of woollen socks, a pair of woollen gloves, and a blanket.*

It has been suggested by Mr. Layard, that the improvements and inventions of the last forty years have not been utilized as much as they ought to have been for the benefit of our troops. The old soldier under examination at the time, thought the honourable gentleman referred to the arms of the men, and pleaded ignorance of all material inventions "applicable to war," except "the metal cap for the lock of the musket, the Minié rifle, and the heavier ordnance."† But the member for Aylesbury was thinking of defensive armour against rain, and not of weapons of offence against a vulgar Russian. "Did you ever see a macintosh cloak used by the troops?" Alas, no! Sir De Lacy could not call to mind a single garment of the kind, except those of some officers, and his own "rather small" and "indifferent" one.‡ It is to be hoped that Lord Panmure will be less Spartan in his notions than his heartless predecessor, and that while the latter only sent to our grenadiers waterproof capes and sheepskins for the winter, the former will give them "zephyrs" for the summer. Why, indeed, should he not supply the gallant fellows with umbrellas, or with those blue veils, which our dandies have in our times made an indispensable

* 4681, 4692.

† Sir De Lacy Evans, 888. ‡ 896, 901.

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article of male attire? They would not be more out of place in the field than on the turf, and so trifling a homage to the manly sentiments of the day would be appreciated by Mr. Layard's admirers.

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X.

SHELTER AND FUEL.

From the clothing let us pass to the shelter provided for the army. During the march, as it has been already stated, the troops were without tents. These they did not get until a day or two after the army reached Balaklava.* But, it has been suggested, many of the tents were old and unfit for service. "A great many of them were very in-"different," says Sir De Lacy Evans, "and some of "them had been used, I believe, during the Penin-"sular war."† This belief, indeed, was expressly stated to be founded on "common report"‡ merely; nevertheless it was soon converted into a fact by the ingenuity of Mr. Layard, who asked General Bentinck whether any of the tents given to him "were the old tents that had been used during "the Peninsular war."§ The General's answer, however, could not have been very satisfactory to his interrogator. "Some might have been," he said; "most of them were very good." "I "never heard any great complaints of them," says the Duke of Cambridge on the same subject, "I have tried to ascertain, but I have not found "that there were any great complaints; but then "there were two or three different sorts, and some "were certainly older than others. I do not think

* 483. † 624. ‡ 940. § 1296.

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" that generally they were to be complained of.* " . . . . . I have heard no complaints " as far as my division was concerned." † It is singular that neither Mr. Roebuck, nor Mr. Layard, nor any other zealous denouncer of administrative incapacity should have thought it worth while to probe this subject to the bottom. They had the means of doing so. Mr. Stacey, the Ordnance storekeeper, who had, by the orders of the Duke of Wellington, examined, in 1844, the state of our camp equipage, and directed the necessary steps for putting the things in a proper condition,—Mr. Stacey, whose duty it has been, ever since, to make an annual survey and an annual report of the tents and of all other Ordnance stores, and on whom would rest the responsibility of issuing from the Tower any tents unfit for use;—this Mr. Stacey was pointed out to them by Sir Thomas Hastings as the person who was immediately conversant with the subject, and therefore as the proper witness for examination upon it.‡ And why was he not called? He was not, like Lord Raglan, Mr. Filder, and Dr. Hall and Captain Christie, and many other victims of ex parte statements, at Balaklava. He was perched upon his high stool in Pall Mall, and well within hail of the Committee. However, neither Mr. Stacey nor the storekeeper of any depôt was called, and the sturdiest advocates of " the right

* 3945. † 4110.

‡ 18343–50. 18357. 18356.

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man in the right place" were content with the evidence of the wrong witness on the wrong subject.

The inference is obvious enough. When those who are ready to countenance a charge shrink from the opportunity of substantiating it, they afford a tolerable proof of the opinion which they entertain of its truth. Let us add, however, that whatever was the age and whatever the defects of our tents, "the British force before Sebastopol was," in the opinion of Sir De Lacy Evans, "better tented than the French force;"* and every rational person who had an opportunity of seeing the bell tents of our men, and the little dog-kennel tents, or *tentes d'abri* of our Allies, cannot for a moment hesitate to concur in this opinion.

But tents could not afford sufficient protection against the wet and cold of winter, on the heights above Sebastopol. Lord Raglan appears to have sent to Sinope for wood for huts very shortly after the battle of Inkermann, for Mr. Clay, a shipowner, and one of the witnesses before the Committee, found the "Cottingham" lying in Balaklava harbour, on the 2nd December filled with planking, which it had procured at that place.† But the home authorities did not leave the care of hutting the men to the chiefs of the army. As soon as the battle of Inkermann had made it evident that our men must pass the winter outside the town, the Duke of Newcastle not only ordered

* 847. † 2778, 2758.

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that 1000 stoves should be sent to the army,* but sent orders to Constantinople for the purchase of wood for the construction of huts, and dispatched a company of Sappers and Miners, with plans, to superintend the manufacture on the spot. Through the instrumentality of Lord Westmoreland, a number of huts were constructed with great rapidity in Austria; and lastly, a considerable supply was prepared at Gloucester.† The construction of the latter were certainly delayed—uselessly delayed; but does the evidence afford the slightest ground for the assertion, that this was owing to the intestinal discords of the Board of Ordnance? Mr. Potter's evidence attributes the delay to Sir Frederic Smith, the Commanding Engineer of the South-west and Sussex District,‡ while Sir Frederic defends his conduct by showing that Mr. Potter's plans were defective, and his materials bad.§ Into the merits of this dispute it is unnecessary to enter. It is sufficient to observe, that at all events the Government were not to blame in the matter. The Duke interfered as soon as the matter was brought under his notice, and the work was thereupon proceeded with, and completed by the 10th or 11th of December. Owing to this circumstance, these huts did not reach at Balaklava as soon as those which had been sent from Trieste; but, certainly, by the end of December, materials for hutting had arrived in abundance at Balaklava.

* Fourth Rep. App. 318. † 14558. ‡ 15450, &c.
§ 19673, &c.

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"So the wooden huts had not arrived at Balaklava when you left?"* said Mr. Layard, in affected astonishment, to Sir De Lacy Evans, who left the Crimea immediately after the battle of Inkermann. No doubt the houses were needed for three or four weeks before they arrived. But let those who trade upon the honest sympathies of the people, and who would persuade them that the sufferings which rent their hearts, were the results of a Minister's indifference, or of a department's incapacity, condescend from vague declamation to calm discussion. Was it not, some may ask, rather "an excessive effort of precaution, to think of sending out barracks (for such they may be considered) to an army in the field?"† The Committee think, with Sir J. Burgoyne and Sir F. Smith, that "if canvas had been sent for doubling "the tents and planks for flooring, effectual shelter "for the troops would have been provided at a "much earlier period, and at smaller cost;" but is it to be believed that the gain of ten days or a fortnight at the outside, would have counterbalanced the advantage which the soldiers derived from having good roofs over their heads? Had the Duke of Newcastle sent canvas instead of huts, we should have had the Committee expressing its regret that the Minister had betrayed so callous an indifference to the comfort of our brave men, as to give them no better covering than canvas, when

* 473. † Sir J. Burgoyne, 4th Rep. App. 310.

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wooden huts might have been constructed in a few days on our own shores, and been sent to the seat of war in a few weeks. It is so easy and so pleasant to find fault. But the people of this country will be less censorious and more just than this Parliamentary tribunal. Far from finding fault with the indefatigable and energetic man who presided over the War department, they will honestly recognise that the despatch of some hundreds of wooden houses from the depths of Austrian forests and the distant shores of this country to the coast of the Crimea was indicative of anything rather than deficient energy. They will be of opinion that credit, rather than blame is due to the Minister who succeeded in placing at the disposal of his troops at a distance of 3000 miles, a number of houses, in the course of six short weeks from the time when it was first foreseen that they would be needed.

But it is said that he should have dived deeper into futurity at an earlier period; that he ought to have known, before he ordered the invasion of the Crimea, that Sebastopol would baffle our arms, and should have been prepared with ready-made villages, as well as with powder and guns, and shot and shell, and food and clothing for the siege of the town. It is very easy for your editorial or parliamentary critic to parade these profound views, seeing that they are formed after, not before the event; but the Minister whose conduct is thus carped at might well ask which of his censors

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would, in his place, have ventured in August or September, or even in October, to incur an expenditure which, according to all human calculation, would prove sheer waste. If Sebastopol had been taken, according to universal and well-grounded expectations, by a *coup de main*, what an outcry should we not have heard from the virtuous guardians of the public purse against that aristocratic prodigality which had wantonly lavished the nation's resources upon objects so utterly useless? What pointed epigrams, what searing sarcasms would not have been showered on the over-careful administrator who had had the wisdom to export wooden houses to a stone city? How the changes would have been rung on the proverbial warning against carrying coals to Newcastle! All the pretty things, and smart things, and false things that were said in Parliament last December and January are stale, flat, and unprofitable, in comparison with the witty, humorous, and imaginative displays which would have delighted the public, at the expense of the Statesman who had ventured upon such an outlay.

And yet these same wise men, whose insight into futurity is so deep, do not shrink from the unparalleled absurdity of complaining that horses were not sent out the whole way from this country to drag the huts up the hill.* Mr. Layard's intercession for horses for siege guns is reasonable in comparison with this new demand of his. A

* 15291.

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gentleman so well acquainted with the East must surely have known that horses are not very scarce in Turkey. At all events, a member of a Committee which had been already furnished with papers shewing that at least a couple of thousand animals belonging to the Commissariat were stabled at Constantinople at the time in question, might have avoided the adoption of a proposition which nothing but the last necessity could have made consistent with common sense. But knavery and folly are more closely akin than is generally believed. Men who do not shrink from untrue assertions to gain a point, will sometimes resort, it would seem, even to the absurd for the same purpose, taking their chance of exposure to what is more dangerous than public indignation—public ridicule.

One other want which the Government are said to have neglected, is easily disposed of. They are accused of not having furnished the troops with fuel. Mr. Layard, indeed, went so far as to endeavour to extract from a very promising witness for the experiment, that the men "actually used their "meat to cook their coffee with—to make a fire "with!"* The report of the Committee, however, does justice to the exertions of the Commissariat on this subject. "In August, or early in Sep- "tember," it states, "Deputy-Commissary-General "Smith entered into contracts for a supply of fuel,

* 3061.

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" and could have procured enough for the army " throughout the winter, but he was not able to " obtain transports for its conveyance; at the same " time the quantity which did reach Balaklava "was more than could be carried to the camp. " He tried to hire native vessels for the service; " but, after the hurricane, the masters of these could " not be induced to attempt the voyage. Accord- " ing to his evidence, it would appear that at Con- " stantinople he had in store all the supplies which " the army could require. No blame can justly " be attached to Deputy Commissary-General " Smith, nor can he be held responsible for the " difficulties and distress which occurred in the " Crimea." It has never been the practice of any nation to supply its armies with fuel. Under ordinary circumstances, fatigue parties are expressly employed for the purpose of collecting the quantity required for their companies or regiments, and although, in parts of the camp, fuel was not easily procurable, the country was not so destitute of wood as it has been generally supposed. The French army was left to its own resources for fuel during the whole winter, with the exception of their field hospitals, which were supplied with wood by the Intendance.

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XI.

STOWAGE AND DELIVERY OF CARGOES: THE HARBOUR.

But giving all due credit to the benevolent intentions of the Government, it may be said, see how all those intentions have been baffled by the stupidity, blundering, and confusion of officials. See how goods have been sent to the East,—packed in such disorder that there was no getting at them when they were wanted. Surely, it will be asked, the bad stowage of cargoes, and the interminable delays that occurred in delivering them at their destination, will not be denied; for no charges have been more profusely supported by circumstantial narratives of particular instances of the evil denounced. The subject is worth a brief notice. "Many complaints," say the Committee, "were "made to your Committee, of the mode in which "stores were sent to the East. The mode in "which stores were sent, depended on the nature "of the requisition. Naval stores were apparently "sent under a satisfactory system. When the Ord-"nance Board apply, a vessel is placed at their dis-"posal, provided they require it; and latterly a "similar system has been adopted with the medical "department. The chief complaints have arisen "in reference to mixed cargoes. The captains of "the vessels, according to the Admiralty instruc-

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" tions, have charge of the cargo; but it is ad-
" mitted that when large passenger steamers were
" employed in this service, the captains were often
" unaccustomed to these duties, and in such cases
" the appointment of a supercargo would have been
" beneficial. Until December, it appears that a
" cargo-book was not regularly kept. A Treasury
" minute, dated 12th December, 1854, states that
" some articles sent out to the Crimea have been
" taken back to England in the same vessels, and
" brought out again to the Crimea before they have
" been delivered; and that in other cases, where
" the vessels have remained with the army, it has
" been three or four months before they have been
" received by the Commissariat. Ships were also
" so loaded, that on arriving at the port to which
" part of the cargo was destined, the position of that
" part of the cargo was unknown, and the ship had
" to proceed on her voyage, carrying with her
" things that ought to have been delivered at the
" intermediate port."

The evil here noticed is not disputed; but again let us ask, for the hundredth time, was it attributable to the neglect of the Minister? Was it attributable to the neglect even of any of his subordinates? The vessels engaged in carrying goods to the seat of war were chiefly the property, not of the Government, but of private individuals or companies; and their masters and crews were the servants, not of the Government, but of the proprietors.

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This, it may be objected *in limine*, was inexpedient; it would have been more economical to purchase the requisite vessels. True, but we should have been unable to man them at the rate of wages allowed in our service,* and our dockyards would not have sufficed to hold the large addition to our stock of vessels.† Under such circumstances, no alternative existed, except that which was actually adopted; and yet it was in that merchant service—the proud heritage of those classes who have been loudest in their clamour against the administrative incapacity of the late and present Governments—that the most serious, as well as the most clearly-proved mismanagement in the whole conduct of the war arose.

"The appointment of a supercargo would have "been beneficial," say the Committee. No doubt it would, if the stupidity, inexperience or inattention of the masters of merchant ships had been as general as it was represented to be. It does not appear that any vessel was ever improperly packed. This part of the business was done by the officers and servants of the Government, and was done effectually. It was asserted last winter with a mixture of scorn and triumph, that the 'Prince' and the 'Robert Lowe' had been so packed that the medicines destined for Scutari lay under tons of Ordnance materials which were to be carried on to Balaklava. It turns out that the stories were utterly

* 16695, 16718. † 16697.

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unfounded. The Commissioners to whom the Duke of Newcastle assigned the task of investigating the subject, reported, with respect to the "Prince," that the evidence brought before them "not only "disproved the allegation 'that the loading was "grossly defective,' but also established the fact "that the Captain of the vessel had no ground "whatever for the alleged statement that shot, "shell and gunpowder for Balaklava were placed "on the top of medical stores destined for Scutari. ". . . . . Captain Goodall, who attended "little to the stowage of the vessel, was probably "not aware of the position of the medical stores, "and, in his anxiety to proceed with the troops "as quickly as possible, may not have taken time "to examine the cargo-book for the purpose of "satisfying himself on that head. Had he done so, "he would have found, as is now proved by the "concurrent testimony of all parties whom we have "examined, whether employed by the Government "or on the part of the owners, for the purpose of "loading the 'Prince,' not only that there could "have been neither shot, shell, nor gunpowder "over the medical stores, as alleged by him, but "that each of these were stowed in their proper "places in the vessel, and that the stores intended "for Scutari might have been landed without any "difficulty during the thirty hours the 'Prince' "lay at Constantinople."*

* Report of the Commission, p. 13.

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What was deficient, in all these cases of mismanagement, was the state of the master's information as to the places in which the several articles of his cargo were stowed away, and this arose either from want of care and attention on his part, or from the sudden removal by the shipowner of the man who had watched the packing of the ship, and the substitution of a stranger in his place. The case of the 'Prince' falls under the former category; to the latter cause, it appears, the difficulty in discharging the cargo of the 'Robert Lowe' is to be attributed.

"We have also investigated with care," say the Commissioners, "the statement 'that the Robert "Lowe transport conveyed a quantity of medical "stores destined for Scutari, over which were placed "cylinders of powder and other things destined for "Balaklava;' and we have to report our conviction "that this statement is entirely unfounded. . . . . "Instead of there having been such a want of care "in the stowage of this vessel as is represented, "more than ordinary precautions appear to have "been taken that the weighty cylinders put on "board should interfere with no other part of the "cargo. Considering that they were of the weight "of 4½ tons each, they must have crushed to atoms "any stores placed under them, and perhaps "seriously compromised the safety of the vessel. "To prevent this, the space in which they were "placed was divided off from the rest of the cargo "by the bulkhead before referred to, and nothing

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" can, apparently, have been more unfounded than " the assertion, that it would require five days to " get out the stores intended for Scutari. All " persons examined concur in stating that five " hours would have been more than sufficient to " get out the stores between the bulkheads, where " alone there could have been any difficulty. But " in consequence of the Captain and chief mate " having both been removed before the sailing of " the vessel, it is more than probable that their " successors were unacquainted with the manner in " which she was stowed, and that much more time " was therefore consumed in getting at the stores " than was at all necessary." And who is the ship-owner that thus removed at a moment's notice the only men on board who knew the position of the cargo? An administrative reformer of the first water—a Drury Lane great-gun of the largest calibre. " The House will be surprised to learn," said Sir C. Wood in a recent speech which Mr. Lindsay will not soon forget, " that the person who removed " the master and the mate was the hon. member for " Tynemouth, who took that step without the " knowledge of the Admiralty!"*

When Messrs. Layard and Roebuck were penning the statement that " much suffering was the con- " sequence of this faulty mode of proceeding, the " sick at Scutari being in need of stores, which in " consequence of bad arrangements were carried to

* House of Commons, June 22.

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" Balaklava," they were little aware that they were pronouncing sentence against their active colleague in Administrative Reform; but there is something of dramatic interest in seeing a blow aimed at the unoffending fall upon the guilty.

This explanation, it will be said, will not apply to cases in which it has been clearly proved that the cargo was tendered at its port of destination and refused. It will not apply, for instance, to Captain Christie's refusal to receive the charcoal consigned to him by Admiral Boxer for the use of the army at a time when our men were in great need of fuel;* nor to the repeated refusal of the Commissariat and Quarter-master Officers to take the boots and shoes which were tendered to them once at Varna, and twice at Balaklava.† No; but who can read the account of the former transaction, without feeling a doubt whether the fuel was really intended for the soldiers? It is certainly singular that the Port Admiral at Constantinople should suddenly have undertaken the duties of the Commissariat of the army, and have sought to impose them on his subordinate. " I do not know who wrote to him," says Deputy-Commissary-General Smith, " but it was not done " through the intervention of the Commissariat."‡ Who can fail to observe, also, that this extraordinary interference occurred in the first days of October,§

* See Captain Kellock's Evidence, 5077, &c.

† See Captain Tallan's Evidence, 17091, &c.

‡ 15854.

§ Captain Kellock arrived at Balaklava with the coal on the 8th October, 5061.

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when our soldiers were still busily employed in plundering the delicious vineyards and orchards of the then smiling Balaklava? But the lovers of romance are careless of dates, and do not shrink from improbabilities. It is not surprising, therefore, that it should have been instantly and readily believed, that the coal was really intended for the army, and that the men were perishing with cold at the time when it was rejected;—that, in short, the poor old sailor who now rests in his grave at Kamiesch, was a monster who offered human sacrifices at the shrine of routine, and not a busy official, who, without magazines for storing the coal, declined to burthen himself with the charge of it, for, perhaps, the cocked hats of the army.

In the same way, without waiting to hear what Commissaries and Quartermaster-Generals might have to say in answer to Captain Tallan's circumstantial accusation, every person who reads his statement will not wonder that the boots and shoes should have been left on board when they were first offered. The date of that offer is the 22nd of August* —but a few days before the army bid adieu to Varna; and it would have been rather preposterous to land goods to-day which must next day have been reshipped. The subsequent refusals at Balaklava, on the 23rd of October,† and the 8th of November,‡ may not improbably have been caused by the uncertainty of our position at that time in

* 17089. † 17113, 7. ‡ 17123.

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the little harbour; but it is worth noticing that, notwithstanding the persistent refusal of the inveterate creatures of routine, Captain Tallan not only deposited, on the day of the last alleged refusal, his boots and shoes in a store pointed out to him by "one of the deputies of the Quartermaster-General's department," * but actually got a receipt for the rejected articles from the Deputy-Quartermaster-General's storekeeper! †

But enough of these idle stories. They would not have been worth even the brief notice above given them, if they were not samples of a host of similar tales which were afloat and credited in this rational country last winter. They prove nothing against those whose conduct they impugned; but the acceptance which they met with from an influential portion of the public press, and from a section of the community, prove that a disposition to censure, and an excessive credulity, are but too general among us.

But the harbour of Balaklava was filthy, it is said, and the shipping was always in a state of confusion owing to a division of authority. These matters are not worth more than the most cursory remark. Was the harbour of Balaklava filthy or not? After it had been crowded for a couple of months with 60 or 70 vessels, it was probably not as transparently pellucid as when it afforded shelter to but half a dozen fishing or coasting boats, and it was

* 17124. † 17127.

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probably not as polluted as the more excitable portion of our loungers and grumblers represented. But is it worth while to examine the evidence on such a subject? Who cares about it? Assuredly not those who pass their lives betwen Chelsea Reach and the Pool. The harbour of Balaklava was certainly never as disgustingly filthy as Father Thames himself. That the Committee should have met day after day in close proximity to that great tidal sewer, and have gasped in apparent horror at the condition of a little port in the Black Sea, shews how much more easy it is to see the mote in your neighbour's eye than the beam in your own. Admit that the cleanliness of the harbour was neglected—are a number of stay-at-home civilians, who are unable, with all the appliances of wealth and science, to rescue from deliberate and intentional pollution the noble stream that flows past their own doors, to sit in judgment, nay, to condemn without hearing, the gallant seamen who had authority in the harbour, for neglect to scavenge it? Had Captain Christie, and Captain Dacres, and Captain Heath, and Captain Powell no duty more pressing than that of raking up and carrying out to sea, the orange-peel, and cabbage leaves, and shavings, and offal, and scum, and dirt, and rubbish which were thrown overboard the vessels in the harbour? The subject is not worth discussing, but in dismissing it, it may be observed that the accounts given to the Committee of the condition of the port,

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are pronounced by Captain Dacres, R.N., the only one of the accused who was heard, to be "most decidedly inaccurate,"* and his testimony is probably entitled to quite as much credit as that of the two or three discontented shipowners and transport captains who made so much of this grievance.

The division of authority of which the Committee complains was, in truth, a division of labour; and the confusion which arose from it, like the confusion which Mr. Stafford found in the different departments at Scutari, was probably more subjective than objective. Just as the honourable member for Northampton "never could know when the "particular departments touched each other,"† so the Committee could not see the demarcation between the duties of the Harbour-Master, the Commandant, and the transport agent of Balaklava. And, of course, in both cases, the defect could not, by possibility, be attributable to defective powers of apprehension. It is not improbable that the division complained of was ill devised and worked ill: but some attempt to illustrate such a defect, by tracing clearly to it even one evil, might surely have been made. Such a course would have been better calculated to ensure the acquiescence of those who are not disposed to adopt, without inquiry, every conclusion of the Parliamentary tribunal.

Whatever confusion existed at Balaklava, however, was far more probably owing to "the narrow

* 16099. † 7599.

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" limits of the harbour," which is described by Admiral Dundas "as a mere ditch," and which "rendered it, under the best system of management, an "inconvenient place for landing the vast quantities "of stores required for an army, including guns, "ammunition, engineers' stores, fascines, gabions, "camp equipage, Quartermaster-General's stores, "and commissariat supplies,"* than to the division of authority complained of.

* 5th Rep. p. 12.

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XII.

FIRST PROSPECTS OF THE COMMISSARIAT — THE STORM — THE ROAD.

But how fared our soldiers in their cold camp in the Crimea? It is fortunate for the cause of history and of truth, that the Committee was furnished with evidence of a somewhat more trustworthy character than that of imaginative eye-witnesses, professional philanthropists, and habitual grumblers. The Commissariat correspondence, and the Commissariat returns, certified by the signatures of commanding officers, leave us no longer at the mercy of rhapsodists and charlatans for our facts; but give us the means of forming a tolerably accurate conception of the difficulties the army had to encounter, and the hardships it had to endure during the past winter.

At first, the salt provisions were hardly needed. Fresh meat was to be obtained in abundance on the spot, and the gardens of Balaklava cannot have been very deficient in vegetables, when our soldiers scorned the 40,000 lbs. of preserved potatoes which the Commissariat had on their hands.* On the 8th of October, however, Mr. Filder began to contemplate the importation of cattle from his depôt at Varna. Varna, forsooth, exclaims Mr. Layard! Why did not that obstinate official,

* 3rd Rep. App. 385.

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whom "I always found very unwilling to listen to anything almost,"* notwithstanding my superior acquaintance with everybody and everything in the East, adopt my suggestion, and "establish a market at Sinope," where he might have obtained "a full supply of fresh meat and provender."† Probably because he had better information of the resources of that place than the confident Member for Aylesbury. Admiral Dundas tried it, and he told the Committee with what success. "I had a "man at Sinope," he said; "the man did get "us some beef, but it was more like carrion than "anything else. I was obliged to give a pound "and a-half a man, and I thought that the (salt) "beef and flour we had on board ship, was better "than bad fresh meat. Latterly he said he could "not get it."‡ To Varna, then, and to Eupatoria, Mr. Filder turned for fresh meat, and as long as the weather continued favourable he had no difficulty in supplying the wants of the army from those places, without sending to the large depôt at Constantinople, where he had some 4000 head of cattle, or to Smyrna, where he had 2000 beasts.§ Several steamers were placed at his disposal for this purpose, and nothing appeared wanting to ensure the troops an abundance of good fresh beef and mutton.

But a series of misfortunes were impending over the luckless Commissariat, which baffled the best

* 2688. † H. of Com. Jan. 26. ‡ 20611. § 15751.

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efforts of its chief. The failure of the bombardment of the 17th October, first awakened his fears. "Although we are very well off at present, "I do not know that I have at any time since the "opening of the campaign felt less assured with "respect to the future."* It was no easy matter, in Mr. Filder's position, to make satisfactory preparations. The harbour of Balaklava, although admirably calculated, from its depth and shelter, to give security to vessels of the largest size, was far too small for the enormous traffic which suddenly flowed into it. With the best care and the highest discipline, it would have been impossible to dispose of some 60 or 70 huge vessels within the harbour without some confusion.†

Great delay, also, arose in clearing the harbour of many of the vessels that arrived, because it was necessary that they should take in ballast after discharging the cargoes with which they were filled.‡ In the next place, there was an utter want of buildings, adapted for magazines,§ in the wretched fishing village. With the exception of the school, which had been converted into an hospital; and the Russian Custom House, which did duty as an ordnance store, there was not an edifice in the place of a better class than wooden cottages and sheds, few of which could boast of being either wind or water tight. Even that "very large house"‖ which was appropriated, to Mr. Layard's

* 13739. † 13951. ‡ 16136. § 13951. ‖ 126.

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great indignation, to Lord Raglan, and which, when not occupied by himself, generally afforded refuge to some sick or convalescent general, was but "a good sized cottage, with perhaps a first-floor to it." * The consequence of the want of magazines was that cargoes were left in the holds of the vessels which had brought them to the place. The necessity of this, indeed, appears to be admitted, for the Committee report, without any "regret," that "there is, it is said, an obvious error in comparing "the transport service between England and the "Crimea to a mercantile arrangement for the con-"veyance and delivery of a given amount of tonnage. "The transports, when sent to the Crimea, could "not deliver their stores, and return; a large "number were permanently detained from military "considerations, and many others were kept at "Balaklava, because there were no warehouses on "shore to receive the cargo."

From the battle of Balaklava, on the 25th of October, the Russians continued to threaten that place, and for some days it was in contemplation to evacuate it. Here was a new element of confusion. The Commissariat chest was sent on board, and all the transports were ordered in hot haste out of the harbour. The Committee complain that the vessels were "compelled to anchor "outside the harbour, an anchorage which naval "men justly considered to be unsafe;" but are

* 13253.

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these gentlemen utterly blind to our military position at that critical juncture? Were the ships to be left in the harbour exposed to destruction by Russian Artillery? Or were they to be sent to sea, and our army to be deprived of its means of retreat in the event of a reverse? Unless either of these alternatives be adopted, it is difficult to find any pretence for the condemnation of this dangerous, if you please, but necessary step.

The insecurity of our tenure of the place, then, as well as the want of warehouse room, compelled Mr. Filder, like the apothecaries and purveyors of the army, to leave his stores on board the vessels which had brought them thither; and when the hurricane of the 14th of November came, no less than seven ships laden with Commissariat supplies, were dashed to pieces against the cliffs of Balaklava bay. With them were lost 359,744 lbs. of biscuit, 74,880 lbs. of salt meat, 157 head of cattle, and 645 sheep, together with about 8000 gallons of rum, 73,986 lbs. of rice, 11,200 lbs. of coffee, 1,116,172 lbs. of forage corn, and 800,000 lbs. of hay. "These losses," Mr. Commissary-General Filder wrote to Lord Raglan, "have placed this army in a critical position with "respect to its supply of provisions and forage. "Other vessels may possibly arrive with provisions "to prevent any deficiency of food for the troops, "but the loss of forage appears to be irreparable, "as only pressed hay, of which none can be ob-

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"tained in Turkey, can be conveyed in sufficient "quantities to meet the consumption of the army."* Indeed, the loss of the "Progress," which was laden with 800,000 lbs. of hay, and of the "Wanderer," which contained 856,000 lbs. of corn,† was perhaps even more deplorable than that of the "Prince," the vessel with whose fate the memory of that terrible day is chiefly associated.

The disastrous effects of the storm, however, were not confined to the destruction of a number of vessels with their cargoes. "Almost every ves- "sel," says Deputy-Commissary General Smith, "was more or less damaged by the hurricane; "it crippled the resources of the Commissariat "very much indeed."‡ The "Tonning" which was despatched to Constantinople for cattle a few days after the storm, was found, on her arrival at Constantinople, to have been so much injured, that it was necessary that she should be repaired before she could again go to sea.§ Eighteen days were consumed in putting her to rights, and then, by some fatality, accident, or mismanagement, three days more were lost because she had no water on board.‖ The "Albatross," another steamer, arrived at the same place, at about the same time; and she too was found to be so seriously injured that it was necessary to send her to the

* 3rd Rep. App. 394. † 3rd Rep. App. 395.
‡ 15693. § 15688, 9.
‖ 15688, 9.

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Turkish dockyard for three weeks.* In consequence of the crippled state of these two vessels, the army was left without fresh meat, for there were no vessels at hand to supply their place.†

As the winter advanced fresh difficulties arose. When the wind blew with violence from the south, it was found impracticable for the Commissariat cattle vessels to get out of Balaklava, owing to the narrow entrance of the harbour. When it blew from any westerly point, they could not take in cargo at Eupatoria.‡ On one occasion, no less than five cattle vessels were prevented for six days by adverse winds from putting to sea.§ On another, a whole cargo of cattle perished on board the "Albatross" steamer, from the severity of the weather.‖ All these accidents, it must be borne in mind, were not merely injurious to the troops, by throwing them on salt rations, but it increased the demand on the Commissariat transport, for fresh meat carries itself on its four legs, but salt meat has no legs available for that purpose, and must be conveyed by other means.

Unfortunately such means as the Commissariat had at their disposal for this purpose began to fail. When the wet weather set in,—about the 20th of November—the roads between Balaklava and the camp broke up. Although one of them has been dignified by the Committee into a "fine Govern-

* 15693. † 15701, 2.

‡ 3rd Rep. App. 403. § Id. 431. ‖ Id. and 15756.

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ment road," while the other is more modestly styled a "useful farm road," they had never been much better than "mere tracks across the country;"* and it had been obvious to everybody that as soon as the rain came, they would cease to be practicable for wheel vehicles. Why then, in the name of common sense, it is said, were they not put into a proper state of repair? This is undoubtedly a question which the public and the army have a right to ask, for the almost total destruction of our means of communication between the sea and the camp, was unquestionably one of the chief causes of the sufferings of our men. But let the question be asked of those who ought to answer it. Could the Duke of Newcastle have mended the road? He did not even know that it was in need of repair until the mischief was done.† "The probable "failure of the communication was not," the Committee allow, "brought to the notice of the Duke "of Newcastle, until too late to enable him to take "measures in England to prevent the serious "calamities which subsequently arose." On what ground then is he or are his colleagues to be censured for those calamities? General Airey, the Quartermaster-General, should have been called upon to explain why the road was not made practicable. Lord Raglan should have been required to explain why his subordinate was permitted to neglect his duty—if there was any neglect in the

* Sir J. Burgoyne, 17215. † 14593.

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case. But neither General Airey nor Lord Raglan were examined; and the Committee thus failed to ascertain the truth upon the most vital point in the whole subject committed to their investigation. And yet these representatives of a people who boast so loudly of their love of justice, have not scrupled to express the belief that "in this "matter there was a want of due foresight and "decision." It is true, they qualify their opinion by admitting that it is formed only "as far as the information obtained enabled" them to form any; but they ought to have recollected that they were discharging a solemn judicial duty, and that in the admitted absence of evidence,—in the admitted absence, above all, of the accused—they would shamefully violate the first principles of justice if they pronounced even a qualified censure. They disregarded, however, such plain considerations of honesty and fair play, and the news of their injustice probably reached the camp in time to embitter the dying hours of our late General.

And yet some of the circumstances which were brought to light, might well have sufficed to suspend any condemnation of the chief of the army. In the first place, nobody expected, at the beginning of the siege, that the British forces would have remained outside the town long enough to need an easy communication with the little fishing village; and although the failure of the bombardment of the 17th of October

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soon excited apprehensions that we might not find winter quarters in Sebastopol, other events of so important and pressing a character rapidly occurred, as naturally to divert the attention of the Authorities from the state of the roads. It was not until after the bloody day of Inkermann that the unwelcome conviction that the army must face the Crimean snows on the plateau, was brought home to the minds of our Generals. On the 13th of November, Mr. Filder called Lord Raglan's attention to the necessity of putting the roads in a proper state of repair. But this was now no easy task. Sir De Lacy Evans thinks that if 1000 men had been set to work for ten days, the road would have been secured,* but that opinion is not shared by another General, whose professional education, entitle his views upon the subject to equal consideration. "It would have required," says Sir John Burgoyne, "a very large force to make "that road. It was seven or eight miles, and it would "have been over a very bad soil—a muddy clay— "and a very bad hill. To construct such a road—for "it was not the repair of a road, but an absolutely "new construction—would have required very enor- "mous means of men, horses and carts.† I think "1000 men would not have done it (I am speak- "ing off-hand) in two or three months."‡ General Bentinck thinks that it would have been very difficult to improve it. "First," he says, "I do not see "with what materials they could have mended them;

* 449. † 17222. ‡ 17225.

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" or, supposing that they had adopted our plan of " macadamising them, where they could have got " the materials, and how break the stone. If they " had put it down, would it not have been as diffi- " cult to pass as a muddy road?"*

The French, it may perhaps be observed, managed to make a road from Kamiesch to their head-quarters, and why could not we follow their example? True, but the French had, also, twice as many men as we had, and not more military duty to perform. How were our thin ranks to supply 1000 men for such a purpose, for such a length of time as Sir John Burgoyne mentions? They hardly sufficed for the work of the trenches along the extensive line which we occupied. They might have been employed on the work, it is contended, before the trenche swere opened. " We began to open the trenches within two days " of our arrival," is the Duke of Cambridge's decisive answer to the suggestion.† But surely the Turkish corps, which was quartered at Balaklava, might have been employed in making the road, suggests Mr. Layard in a tone imputing neglect on the part of Lord Raglan to avail himself of this resource. It turns out that on the day after the date of Mr. Filder's communication, a general order directed that they should be so employed.‡ They proved, however, utterly unfit for the task. Bono Johnny failed us on the road as he had failed us in the field three weeks before, and with his failure, all efforts on the spot to remedy the evil ceased.

* 1391. † 3822. ‡ 3rd Rep. App. 396.

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XIII.

THE LAND TRANSPORT.

The consequences of the destruction of the roads soon became perceptible upon the Commissariat transport. It has been so frequently and so pertinaciously asserted, that our army was always insufficiently supplied with baggage animals, that most people will be surprised to learn from Mr. Filder's correspondence with the Treasury, that one of the first cares which pressed upon the Commissary-General before he had been at Balaklava a fortnight, related not to the acquisition of beasts of burden, but to the disposal of his superfluous animals, who were eating, not their tails, but their heads off at Varna. "The number (1203 ammu-"nition animals, and 70 waggons with mules) he "now has," he says, writing to Lord Raglan on the 5th of October, "with some few more of the "most efficient of the animals that might be "brought from Varna would, in his opinion, be "adequate to the transport of this army, should "its operations be confined within a limited sphere, "as at present. If any greater number were to be "brought over than would suffice for this object, "they would only add to the difficulty of feeding "the horses and baggage animals already in the

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"Crimea."* "Within little more than a fortnight "from the time of our landing," he says to Sir C. Trevelyan, "I had imported into the Crimea:—

216 carts, with 216 Spanish or Maltese mules, capable of conveying each 600 lbs., or	129,000
And 266 pack animals, capable of conveying 200 lbs. each, or . .	53,000
Total conveyed by means of public transport	182,000

"There were at that time, in addition, in the employment of the Commissariat:—

193 hired country waggons, capable of conveying each 700 lbs. . .	135,100
Equal to the conveyance of . . lbs.	317,300

"Which is much more than is required for the "British army in respect of Commissariat supplies, "whilst in its present potition."† And there is no reason to doubt the reasonableness of this calculation. Mr. Filder states that "down to the middle "of November his cattle sufficed to carry to the "camp not only the ordinary, but the extra rations "also"—that is, an extra ration of biscuit, and an extra quarter of a pound of meat for each man, and

* 3rd Rep. App. 430. † 3rd Rep. App. p. 386.

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a treble ration of rum for those on service in the trenches,*—" but also to assist in conveying stores " to the trenches. In addition to this, 150 mules " and carts, which had been appropriated for the " purpose of forming a depôt of provisions on the " high ground at head-quarters, near the camp, as " a precautionary measure against bad weather and " bad roads, were employed several days imme- " diately after the battle of Inkermann in carrying " up musket ammunition to the camp."†

The Commissariat transport, in truth, had at this time nothing to fear from a comparison with that of the French Intendance. " There would appear to " be a misconception," observes Mr. Filder in the letter, just quoted, to Sir C. Trevelyan, "as to the " quantity of transport in possession of the French, " although what they have is adequate to their wants " whilst they are within six miles of their depôt, and " is excellent of its kind, being part of the regularly " organized transport belonging to their army when " in France and Algeria; it is (exclusive of the " ambulance corps) very limited in amount, being " equal to the conveyance of little more than one " day's supply for their force.

" Admitting that the French have imported into " the Crimea all the transport they brought with " them from France, and which they had in Bul- " garia, it would consist, exclusive of the ambulance

* 13869. † 3rd Rep., App. 430.

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" train, of 50 four-horse waggons, capable of con-
" veying 2000 lbs., or . . . lbs. 100,000
" And 400 mules ditto, 200 lbs. each . 80,000

" Total for Commissariat purposes, lbs. 180,000.

" The French had, in addition, some country " waggons employed in their service, but they were " few in number, about 20 or 30.

" The public transport in possession of the Com-
" missariat . . . . was therefore equal, positively, in " amount to that of the French army, and, relatively " to the respective forces of the two armies, much " greater.

" The French are, therefore, no more indepen-
" dent of the transport of the country in which " operations may be carried on, than the English, " excepting that their soldiers carry six, and some-
" times eight, days' rations on their persons, whilst " ours carry only one day's rations, and not always " that. There is, indeed, no instance on record of " an army bringing with it from one country into " another its own means of conveyance, so as to " be made independent of the transport of the " country." *

But our means of transport were soon crippled when the roads broke up. As the carts fell into pieces in the ruts and holes over which it was attempted to drag them, the transport-power of the

* 3rd Rep., App. 430.

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animals harnessed to them was reduced by two-thirds; for a beast that could draw 600 lbs. through the stiff clay and up the steep hill to the camp, could not, according to Mr. Filder's calculation, carry more than 200 lbs. Their efficiency was, before long, depreciated to one-sixth of what it had been; for as the winter advanced, the roads grew worse and worse, and the animals became unable to perform a journey over them oftener than three times a week.* Then came sickness and mortality among them to thin their numbers. Inadequate food, exposure to the weather, the neglect and brutality which they encountered—all these causes combined to reduce the means of transport at the disposal of the Commissariat, which were further diminished by robbery. The prevalence of horse-stealing was not only notorious, but was even the familiar subject of jest in the camp during the last winter.† Finally, such of the beasts as were available were sometimes taken from the Commissariat to convey the sick from the camp to Balaklava.‡

Under these circumstances, the "Jason" was sent on the 28th of November, to bring up a fresh supply of animals from Constantinople, to which place the Commissariat beasts which had been left at

* 3rd Rep. App. 429.

† See the letter of Mr. Nixon, 3rd Rep. App. 414, and 4th paragraph of Mr. Bagot Smith's letter, 3rd Rep. App. 413. A Trip to the Trenches, 151.

‡ 3rd Rep. App. 429.

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Varna had been ordered. But that vessel, instead of returning, as was expected, in four or five days, did not return till the 16th of December.* She arrived at Constantinople at a period of unusually stormy weather, and for several days the lighters could not get alongside of her, to supply her with coal. This process was performed but slowly by the native labourers; and the horses were not ready for shipment for some days.† The delay was unquestionably the *coup de grace* to the Commissariat transport, and was the cause of much of the suffering of the army. The Maltese, Bulgarian, and Tartar drivers disappeared as fast as their beasts. Some died, others deserted, many refused to work; and as December advanced it became necessary to call in the aid of fatigue parties from the camp in support of the failing means of transport in the power of the Commissariat.

The laborious task of dragging their provisions through the mud of Balaklava, and the tenacious mire of the steep ascent to the plateau, was unquestionably a grievous addition to the already severe duties of the men. But before declaiming against the short-comings of the unlucky department which was, in truth, the victim and not the cause of this misfortune, let us ask how often it fell to our men to perform this heavy work. Mr. Filder, in his memorandum of the 15th of February, declares, that "the practice of sending men to Bala-

* 16527. † 5th Rep. App. 61.

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"klava for rations was very partial and limited." Had the "Jason" returned within the usual period, instead of being detained three weeks, "it would "have been unnecessary," he writes, "for the troops "to carry up any portion of their rations, as "they ceased to do so shortly after the animals "she brought" (250 in number*) "became avail- "able, with the exception of a few regiments of "the Light Division, which continued to send "down men that were off duty to carry up pro- "visions, with the view of forming reserve regi- "mental depôts. Of the five Divisions of In- "fantry," he adds, "two, the First and Third, never "sent any men; the Fourth Division sent them "three times; the Second sent parties four times, "which amounted in the aggregate to 800 men; "and the Light Division only had recourse to "this measure between the 11th and 20th De- "cember, with the exception above-mentioned "respecting the regimental reserves."† It is necessary, however, to bear in mind, that the men were obliged to assist in carrying up their warm clothing, as well as their provisions, to the camp; but this was a task which could not have cost them many journeys.

* 3rd Rep. App. 414. † 3rd Rep. App. 429.

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XIV.

THE RATIONS.

And now let us see to what extent it is true, that our men were, under these miserable circumstances of toil, hardship, and cold, left "without food." Take, in the first instance, the evidence of the Generals examined by the Committee. Not only the personal character and position of those officers, but the feeling which they appear to entertain towards the Commissary-General, place their testimony above the suspicion of any desire to conceal or extenuate the true state of the case. "So far as regarded the actual rations," says Sir De Lacy Evans, "they" (the Commissaries attached to his Division) "did all that was possible "to be done, I think, and it was very seldom that "any article was deficient. Sometimes rum was "deficient, owing to the want of transport, but "very rarely after I had these officers; and even "up to the 2nd of February, (for I have received "letters from the Division) through the exertions "chiefly of these officers whom I have named "the Division has seldom been without rations; "hardly at all. I do not mean to say but that "sometimes, under circumstances, one article or "another failed; that we did not get enough of "fresh provisions, and that we did not get enough "of vegetables; but still, upon the whole, the

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"troops had wherewithal to sustain themselves."* "Certainly our material wants were very satisfac- "torily supplied."† General Bentinck's evidence is much to the same effect. "We had always," he says, "our Commissariat establishment for the "Division within half a mile of the brigade. We "were always regularly supplied with meat and "biscuit; what the men wanted most was vege- "tables and tobacco; they were rather wanting; "but the ordinary food of the soldier, meat and "biscuit, was supplied."‡ "The first Division," says the Duke of Cambridge, "even up to a very late "period (and I have received letters from thence) "have never been without rations, with the exception "of now and then, that they were a little short of "rum, but they always had their biscuit and "meat."§ "We had a tolerable supply of fresh "meat," he says, elsewhere, "about three times a "week, I think, up to about the middle of Octo- "ber; and then afterwards we had very rarely "fresh meat; almost always salt meat."‖ The only soldier examined by the Committee speaks even more favourably of the Commissariat. "Our "Commissary," says Sergeant Dawson, "has gene- "rally been pretty good. The only fault we "found with our Commissary was, as to the green "coffee, during the time I was there,"—that is, until the battle of Inkermann—"I never heard

* 466. † 827. ‡ 1209. § 3839. ‖ 4097.

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"them complain much, except as to the green "coffee."*

This evidence, however, is not of much importance, because it is either limited to the early part of the siege, or is based chiefly upon mere hearsay. But, happily, we are not left dependent upon such sources of information. Among the papers produced by Sir Charles Trevelyan are a series of returns, shewing the deficiencies in the rations supplied to the several Divisions; and those papers give the requisite information upon the subject, with all the precision that the most scrutinising critic can desire. From the documents in question, it appears that the first Division was never short of any of its rations, except on the 18th of December, when the ordinary and the double rations of rum of the Coldstream Guards were half a gill short, and on the 12th and 13th of January, when the Scots Fusilier Guards were without their allowance of sugar, amounting to 3½ oz. per man.† The second Division was not so fortunate. Its second brigade, indeed, and the Artillery attached to the Division were always fully supplied throughout the winter; and the 95th regiment, which forms part of the first brigade of the same Division, never were short of any article except rum, and of this the whole regiment was only 8⅜ gallons short. It was upon the other regiments of the brigade—the 38th, 55th, and

* 5464. † App. 3rd Rep. 416.

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62nd, that the evil fell. The total of the deficiencies of the supplies to those regiments during the whole winter were as follows :—

Meat	1660 lbs.
Rum	91 gallons.
Coffee	377 lbs.
Sugar	431 lbs.*

Or about 1lb. of meat, half a pint of rum, a quarter of a pound of sugar, and nearly the same weight of coffee per man in the course of some six weeks.†

In the third Division, the deficiencies occurred between 1st December and 8th January; and they are as follows :—In the eighteen days from the 1st to the 18th of December they averaged per man—

1 lb. of meat, in lieu of which 2 oz. of rice were issued.

Half a pound of biscuit, for which 2 oz. of rice were issued.

Four and a half gills of rum.

* App. 3rd Rep. 417.

† Mr. Power states, and in that statement Major-General Buller "entirely concurs," that the deficiency in meat "with reference "to the strength" only amounted to one-third of a pound. But the "strength" which he takes into account is that of the Division, and not of the regiments that suffered. The rough estimate in the text refers to those regiments only, and assumes that they did not, together, number more than 1660 mouths, which is probably under the mark. We must not be misled by the pleasant fallacy of "bayonets" which had so much vogue last winter, when we are dealing with *munitions de bouche*.

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Four and a half ounces of sugar.*

And in the twenty days between the 19th December and the 8th January the deficiencies averaged per man—

1¾ lb. of meat.
½ lb. of biscuit.
1 gill of rum.
1 oz. of sugar.
2 oz. of rice.
1 oz. of coffee.†

The deficiencies in the rations of the 4th Division were much greater in the two most important articles. From the 2nd to the 30th of December, each man was short by 9 lbs. of his full allowance of meat, and by 6 gills of his allowance of rum. His ration of biscuit was deficient by 4 oz.; of sugar, by 2½oz; and of coffee, by 1½ oz.‡ In January the deficiencies were 5 oz. of biscuit, 4 oz. of meat, 2 oz. of sugar, 2½ gills of rum, and 1 lb. 10 oz. of rice.§

In order, however, to appreciate exactly the injury sustained by the troops from the deficiencies above-mentioned, it is necessary to inquire over how many days the loss was spread, and also what was the actual amount of food which they received on those days. The returns of the first Division have been already sufficiently noticed on these

* App. 3rd Rep. p. 427. † App. 3rd Rep. p. 428
‡ 3rd Rep. App. 423. § 3rd Rep. App. 424.

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points. Those of the second do not shew what the daily issues were; but this information is supplied by the returns of the 3rd and 4th Divisions. From these it appears that the men of the 3rd Division received half a ration of meat on five days, and three-fourths of a ration on one day during the whole winter—that is, half a ration on the 8th, 9th, 25th,* 28th, and 29th of December, and three-fourths on the 20th December. But rice was issued in partial compensation of the deficieney. The men were on a half ration of biscuit on one day only, the 8th of December; on the 10th, they had no rum, and on nine other days of the same month they did not receive a double ration of that spirit.

The deficiencies of the fourth Division are, like those of the other Divisions, almost wholly confined to the month of December. The returns, certified by the commanding officers of the regiments, shew that on one day, the 6th of December, the men had no meat; that they were on half rations during 9 days, on two-thirds during 6 days, and on three-fourths for 6 days more. On one day only in January, (the 4th,) were they short of their full allowance, and on that day they had three-quarters of a ration. As to rum, they had none on the 16th of December; on four other days they had only a quarter of the full ration, on one day, one-third, on two, a half, on two, two-thirds,

* Owing to the guard having suffered the cattle to escape.

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and on four, three-quarters of their full allowance. On four days in January also they received a short supply of the same article. The men in the trenches, however, invariably received their double allowance. The biscuit was short only on the 4th of December, when three-fourths of a ration were served, and on the 17th January, when the men got only two-thirds of their allowance.

The officers of this Division, it is true, complained that the Commissariat return did not give a fair view of the extent of the men's privations; and the Committee have made the most of this case. "In the Appendix," they say, "a statement "by a board of officers will be found, in which it is "affirmed that the men, for days and weeks together, "went to the trenches with an insufficient meal, and "oftentimes with none at all, save a little biscuit and "rum. Any result derived from an average of "rations issued is delusive, because privation on one "day is not compensated by superfluity on another." —The Committee might in fairness have added that in the Appendix would also be found a statement by the Commissary of the Division asserting that the return was not made up by taking "an average of rations" in a fortnight, as the military officers assert, but that the rations stated in the table were issued "between morning and night of each day."* If this be true, the fact that "the men, for

* 3rd Rep. App. 433.

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days and weeks together, went down to the trenches with an insufficient meal, and oftentimes with none at all, save a little biscuit and rum," must be referred to other causes, which will be presently suggested.

The returns of the Light Division, show that most of the men—for some regiments were more fortunate than others—were in December last, once on quarter, five times on half, and three times on three-quarter rations of meat. For twelve days they had only half of their allowance of rum; but the Temperance Society will rejoice to find that the full supply of coffee and sugar never failed. Once only was the ration of biscuit deficient, and then by one half. In the following month, the 90th was once without meat, and, with the 19th, 77th, and 88th, was six times on a half supply—a misfortune which the 23rd, and the Rifles, escaped altogether, but which occurred once to the 33rd, and twice to the 34th, and the marines attached to the Division. The 19th, 77th, 88th, and 90th, on fourteen occasions, the marines, 33rd and 34th, on three, and the 23rd on two, were on half rations of rum; but the 7th and Rifles were always fully supplied. Once it happened to the 19th, 77th, 88th, and 90th, to be without sugar; and six times during the month, the whole Division was left unsupplied with rice.

The very idea of short commons has something extremely unpleasant about it, while the terms

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"full diet" and "whole portions," on the other hand, sound gratefully in our ears. But after all, to understand what is meant by such words, it is necessary to put weights and measures into requisition. They are indispensable to give precision to our notions, for it may turn out that the stinted allowance is abundant, while the regulation supply leaves an ample surplus to all but the most capacious stomachs—just as the half diet of an English hospital may prove about equivalent to the full one of our French friends. Now the soldiers' ration consists, at home, of three-quarters of a pound of meat, and a pound of bread. The ration abroad is generally a pound of meat, to compensate for the bad quality. But in the Crimea it amounted to 1½ pound of meat,* and 1⅓ pound of biscuit,† besides a gill of rum, an ounce of coffee, and 1¼ ounces of sugar.‡ It follows that half a ration of meat before Sebastopol is exactly equal to a full ration in England.

Now, it will be found upon examining the figures above given, that with the exception that the 4th Division and the 90th regiment on one day received no meat, and that on one day the Light Division received only ¼ ration—equivalent to half a ration in England—every soldier before Sebastopol got daily at least as large a ration of meat as he would have had if he had been quartered in

* 20101. † 3rd Rep. App. 387.

‡ 3rd Rep. App. 393.

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England. So much for the starvation of our troops. So much for Mr. Roebuck's assertion in January that the army was "without food." So much for his assertion in June that they had "insufficient food."*

The complaint that their food consisted, during this period, of salt meat, was better founded, though not altogether true. "Up to the time that I left "the army, on the 8th of December," says Lord Cardigan, "they (his men) had almost constantly "fresh, and sometimes salt meat. Up to that "time, I believe, that they generally had fresh "meat."† Captain Shakspear's troop of Horse Artillery "had fresh meat three or four days in the week."‡ And as fresh meat carries itself, while salt provisions must be carried, it is not likely that the Commissariat sent cured meat to the heights, while they drove their cattle to troops quartered near Balaklava. "I think," says Lieutenant-Colonel Sparks, speaking of the 3rd Division, "we "had, at one time, salt provisions for a continu-"ance; but generally, I think, we had two or "three days' salt provisions, and then fresh. I "think we had much more fresh than salt, until "the weather got so very bad." The Committee thus sums up the evidence on this point: "The "witnesses are not agreed as to the quantity of

* Draft Resolutions proposed by Chairman, 5th Rep. p. 36.

† 5732. ‡ 4670.

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"fresh meat supplied to the army; the regularity "of the distribution depended partly on the zeal "and energy of the several Commissariat officers, "and also on the position occupied by the troops. "Until the end of October the rations, it is said, "were furnished with regularity, and consisted "of fresh meat twice or thrice in the week. "Mr. Parker, chaplain to the First Division "from the 28th of November till the 23rd of "January, states that during this period the hos- "pitals were supplied with fresh meat almost every "day; but the troops did not receive it, he thinks, "above once a-week; he never knew them, how- "ever, to be without rations." But even if it were true that the troops had been fed during the whole winter on salt rations, what then? Surely war brings greater evils than salt pork in its train; and the privations of our army need not have been made ridiculous by including the rare supply of fresh meat among them. Certainly the maudlin sentimentality which wept at the thought of condemning a hardy soldiery to fare for six weeks or a couple of months, as the gentry of this country used to fare during the whole winter a century ago, has no parallel, except in that overflowing sympathy which was thrown away on the needy knife-grinder. The parallel, however, is tolerably complete; for not only are the philanthropists, in both cases, equally disinterested and honest, but, in both, the objects of their compassion are equally insensible

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of the cruelty of their lot. The soldiers, indeed, appear to have been less than indifferent—they actually liked it. "The men," says the Correspondent of the Times, "strange to say, prefer the salt meat to the fresh!"* Rice formed no part of the soldier's ration while the difficulty of transport continued; but this was owing solely to that difficulty and not to the want of the article in question. Indeed, the Commissariat maintained with rice and biscuit some 8000 Turks from the 15th of October, during the whole winter. To the same cause the want of vegetables must also be attributed.

* "Times," May 31, 1855.

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XV.

FORAGE.

Our cavalry soldiers invariably received their full rations—the return of deficiencies being, for the Heavy Brigade, "none," and for the Light, "nil."* In the case of the cavalry, however, our sympathies have been diverted from the man to the beast, and the starvation to which the latter was condemned during the whole winter, has excited almost as much indignation, while it has been the ground work of more fable than the sufferings of our fellow-countrymen.

Certainly the supply of forage was one of Mr. Filder's most formidable difficulties. He admits that there was a deficiency "from about the 22nd to the 30th of November,"† but he attributes this to the terrible loss sustained on the 14th of November. However, he lost no time in recruiting his stores. In this instance, Mr. Layard has no reason to complain that the Commissary-General neglected his precious counsel to resort to Sinope for provender. That officer sent not only to Sinope, but also to every other place in the Black Sea to purchase hay, but at only one of them could he procure any, and then only a small quantity.‡ Of chopped straw, indeed, he could always obtain enough, for

* 3rd Rep. App. 426.

† 4th Rep. App. 309. ‡ 3rd Rep. App. 404.

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he had a depôt for it at Constantinople; but its bulk rendered it extremely inconvenient for sea carriage. A vessel of 600 tons could not carry more than 50 tons of it, for it did not, like hay, admit of compression.* Although, therefore, it was quite true, as Mr. Roebuck courteously observed to Sir Charles Trevelyan, that "there is a difference in the distance between Balaklava and Sinope, and the distance between Balaklava and England,"† it proved equally incontestable that it was more convenient and practicable to obtain hay from this country, than straw from Asia Minor. And to England he accordingly wrote for a supply.

But he did not in the meantime delay in getting chopped straw. "I have the honour to state," he says on the 19th of January, "that at no time, from "a few days subsequent to the hurricane, have we "ever been without two or three vessels in the har- "bour of Balaklava laden with chopped straw.‡ "With respect to forage," he says a few days later, "I would observe that with the exception of a few "days after the hurricane, we have never been with- "out a supply of hay or straw at Balaklava; but "the state of the weather, the appropriation of the "men-of-war's boats (upon which we are depen- "dent) to the landing of guns and ammunition, "and embarkation of sick and wounded, or other "circumstances, have occasionally prevented a suffi-

* 3rd Rep., App. 404. † 13755.
‡ 3rd Rep., App. 406.

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" cient quantity from being brought on shore; and " in some instances the cavalry have declined re- " ceiving chopped straw when landed." * Lord Lucan's circumstantial account of the Commissariat having borrowed thirty days' fodder from the French Intendance, which had been obligingly offered to our troops in consequence of a conversation between his Lordship and General Canrobert,† was an error into which the noble narrator may perhaps be pardoned for having fallen, though the Committee is without excuse for its unhesitating acceptance, in this, as in so many other occasions, of mere hearsay evidence. Mr. Filder's resources were never at so low an ebb as to make such a loan necessary. "I would beg to observe," he writes on the 29th of March last, "that his Lordship has been " misinformed on the subject, as I have never " received any assistance from the French admi- " nistration except on one occasion, when the " arrival of my own supplies from Constantinople " having been retarded by a long continuance of " contrary winds, I obtained the loan of a vessel " laden with chopped straw (unpressed), containing " less than one day's issue for the British army, " and which was repaid in kind shortly afterwards."‡

Notwithstanding all the exertions of the Commissary-General in procuring fodder, however, the public were taught to believe that the horses of the army were left without food. Indeed, an

* 14047. † 6398. ‡ 3rd Rep., App. 355.

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M.P. was found ready to give the Committee the famous history of the cavalry horses having devoured each other's manes and tails to allay the intolerable pangs of starvation. A Mr. Clay, also, a shipowner, gravely assured the Committee that in the cavalry camp, about Christmas last, "all "the manes and tails were eaten off. Most of "them (the horses) were quite bare. They had "eaten each other's manes and tails off."* But as the poor brutes were described as standing three or four feet apart, with their heads fastened down to the pickets by ropes,† it was not easy to see how they had managed to reach the tempting food, until the difficulty was solved by the ingenuity of Mr. Layard, who suggested that the animals must have eaten, not their neighbours' but their own tails!‡

* 2807. The evidence of this witness brought some startling facts to light. From him we learn that the Zouaves were building *granite* huts for themselves and the British in the month of December (2814). Whether the granite was imported from Aberdeen or Kingstown does not appear; but certainly it is rather a scarce commodity in strata ascending from the Jurassic period to the most recent tertiary strata. We are also told by the same gentleman that the legs of many of the frost-bitten patients on board the Monarchy had rotted off, and been thrown overboard (2833). To the latter fact, it is right to state, he was not an eye-witness; he derived his information from the Captain of the Monarchy, who had given it to the Captain of the City of London, who gave it to the witness. And yet this notable piece of third-hand evidence — transmitted through a brace of sea-captains, too! was gravely received by this Committee of Inquiry.

† 3955, 6. ‡ 3057.

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As the performance was not witnessed by Mr. Clay any more than by Mr. Dundas, it is not possible to decide positively whether the voracity of the quadrupeds was intercaudal or suicaudal; and upon this point, therefore, the world must be satisfied to remain suspended in doubt till next winter campaign, when an undoubted eye witness will assuredly be producible. Meanwhile, it may be observed that if our cavalry horses did try a taste of their own or their neighbours' hair, the unnatural fancy for the unwonted food did not arise from any want of their customary provender. Mr. Filder's returns will satisfy the most sceptical on this point. Even Lord Lucan, who appears to have carried on a paper war with the Commissary General during the whole of his brief career with the army, could find no graver cause of complaint than that occasionally the supply of hay was short, or that the additional allowance of oats which was given in lieu, did not compensate for the deficiency.*

But the Noble Lord's complaints have been tested and reduced to their just value. Having represented that from a personal inspection of the quantities of fodder landed on the wharves between the 4th and the 16th of December, he had satisfied himself that the horses had received short rations, and had suffered severely in consequence, Mr. Filder obtained a return of the quantities actually supplied to the cavalry during the period in question, and from that docu-

* See ex. gr. 6363.

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ment it appears that instead of a deficiency, the issues were in excess to all the regiments, except the 5th Dragoon Guards and 1st Dragoons. Those two regiments, indeed, suffered a deficiency on each day, but the Commissary General is hardly to be blamed for this. They had the same means of receiving their full allowance of forage as the other regiments, and the Commissary General asserts that he had frequently observed that "hay remained over on the wharf "unissued on days on which a deficiency was re-"ported." * It would indeed have been singular, if the Commissariat supply had been short, that they should have daily issued more than enough to every regiment except two, and have daily stinted those two. Mr. Dundas discovered in "a difficulty in "obtaining the signing of the receipts for the "fodder," † a reason for the imaginary famine which decimated our quadrupeds, but he probably drew his information from those trustworthy sources from which our tourists and newspaper writers have obtained so many valuable "facts." The "routine" which is thus denounced, ought surely to have extended its baneful influence beyond the 5th Dragoon Guards and the 1st Dragoons; or, at all events, the officers of those regiments ought to have triumphed over its shackles and obstacles as well as their brethren of the other regiments.

It is right to add, that the 6th Dragoons and 4th Dragoon Guards, were short of hay during the

* 4th Rep., App. 307. † 175.

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above mentioned period. But this deficiency was balanced by a correspondingly excessive supply of corn; and although this is not in all respects a satisfactory equivalent, its substitution surely could not be a very grievous hardship. Another return, shews that from the 17th of December to the 10th of January, the whole of the heavy cavalry was fully rationed; and that of the light cavalry, four regiments, were a little short of hay,—the amount due being about 76,000 lbs., and the quantity supplied 64,000—while on the other hand they received more than their full allowance of corn.*

If the honourable member for Linlithgow, had been less the victim of a preconceived idea, he might have discovered, readily enough, other reasons for the miserable condition of the cavalry horses. He might have taken a hint from the superior condition in which he found the charger of the worthy Irish trooper, whom he saw, hard at work, "brushing and currying" his horse. In that case, at least, he discovered in the care of the master the more probable cause of the superior condition of a horse that struck his attention, than in the mere supply of food.† It is true, our horses were not in as good a condition as the grey Arab chargers of the French Spahis, and that many died during the winter; but other causes must be sought for an explanation of this. Exposure to the inclemency of the weather did much, and the French horses of

* 4th Rep., App. 309. † 196.

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our Allies proved this as much as ours. The English animals had, however, to suffer much in addition from the neglect and brutality of the troopers. The poor brutes might have been frequently seen standing up to their fetlocks in mire, which might have been avoided by moving a few yards. The cruel treatment of the helpless quadrupeds must also be taken into account. "It is a national defect on the part of the "British," says Sir John Burgoyne, "that they do "not take care of their horses as other troops do. "They have no feeling for the horse. They do it "according to regulations, according to order; but "they have not the feeling in themselves to take care "of their animals."* Every person who was in the camp during the last winter must be painfully sensible of the justice of this imputation, so far as it affects our soldiers. Even the author of *A Trip to the Trenches*, who devoutly swallowed every tale—maritime or shore-going—of official incapacity and indifference, repeatedly adverts to a cruelty which "made him feel almost ashamed of humanity."† "I have seen," he says, "Indians "ill-treat and abuse their animals, and I thought "their hardness could not be exceeded; but I am "sorry to say that the road from the camp to "Balaklava would daily offer examples of cruelty "that would make an Indian blush through his "paint."‡ Horse artillery, cavalry, infantry,—

* 17247. † pp. 124, 131, 238, etc. ‡ Id. 131.

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all furnished daily instances of that unfeeling ruffianism which the old General and the Amateur alike denounce, and to which much of the mortality among our cattle must unquestionably be attributed.

The cavalry horses, in truth, fared far better than those of the regimental officers quartered on the heights before Sebastopol. They, poor creatures, were often left to their ration of barley, because their owners thought that the chopped straw which was offered them when hay was scarce, was not worth the carriage. It is probable, however, that all our horses suffered more from want of shelter than want of food. In this respect the French fared no better. Indeed, they seem to have been worse off, for while, according to Lord Cardigan, sheds were "just being raised" for our animals, as he was about leaving the country, the 8th of December,* the same noble lord says that he never saw a horse in the French service with any covering, or the sheds under which they were said to be stabled, any more than he could ever see the huts with which report supplied the French soldiers.† Their Arab horses indeed stood the climate without suffering; but whether this is owing to the practice which Mr. Layard attributes to that portion of the French cavalry, of always keeping their horses saddled and covered with a cloth,‡ is a question which need not be here decided or discussed.

* 5844, 5731. † 5829. ‡ 2583.

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All these facts have been ignored by the Committee. They recapitulate the evidence of the witnesses who complained of want of forage, but they omit all notice of the manner in which Mr. Filder has met the charges brought against his department on this subject. In the end, however, they are compelled to admit that "to what extent "the Commissariat is responsible for the deficiency "in all these supplies, is a question to which it is "not easy to give a definite answer."

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XVI.

THE CONDITION OF THE TROOPS.

The condition of our troops in December and January was assuredly most distressing, but the causes of their sufferings have been much misrepresented in this country. It was commonly believed that they were dying of starvation, caused by the neglect of the Government and the Commissariat to supply them with food. It is abundantly manifest that they were hardly ever left without enough, seldom without more than enough to eat and drink. It was the general impression that their clothes were so scanty and so worn as scarcely to satisfy the exigencies of decency, much less those of health and comfort. The Committee gives no countenance to the supposition. The truth is, that by the middle of December, the greater part of the men were supplied with flannel waistcoats and drawers, and with woollen socks, and that in two or three weeks more they received an abundant supply of the warmest outer clothing. It was thought that they were exposed to all the severity of an excessively cold climate, without adequate shelter. It is true, that until late in January, their huts had not begun to reach the camp, but they lived in tents, of "single canvas,"* if you please, —but still much superior in

* Rep, of Committee.

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capacity and material to those of our allies. The rigours of the Crimean winter, it may be added, were much exaggerated. The temperature was variable, but the thermometer probably never fell within a dozen degrees as low as it did in London last February.

If it were true that salt meat, indifferent clothing, and insufficient shelter were the causes of the misery, sickness, and mortality which reigned in the camp, how did it happen that the French forces, and our own sailors who formed the naval brigade, continued in comparative health and comfort? The former had their fair share of salt meat beyond doubt. In the middle of January, salt pork was the only food of their sick at Kamiesch.* They received their sheep-skins two or three weeks earlier than our own men, it is true, but on the other hand, their *tentes d'abri* were far inferior to the English bell tent, and were still generally occupied as late as February last.† As to our seamen, their provisions, Captain Hillyar, R.N., states, consisted chiefly of salt pork and salt beef.‡ They lived in tents, and not in huts, as it has been supposed.§ As to their clothing, their pea jackets were probably more comfortable than the regulation great coat, but they had actually to procure their boots from the army.‖ They supplied working parties to the trenches when

* This statement is made on the authority of a French medical officer.

† 4917.

‡ 17166. § 17181, 17198. ‖ 17199.

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required,* and they had to furnish guards to their batteries.† They had also to carry up shot and shell‡ and their provisions from Balaklava—a distance of from 5½ to 6½ miles.§ In all these respects, the seamen were in a very similar condition to that of the soldiers, and yet they were in a healthy state during the whole winter, and lost but 30 men out of 1400.‖

The misery, sickness, and mortality which reigned in the camp has been assigned by men who are better acquainted with the true state of affairs, to overwork. General Bentinck told the Committee that the widely-spread illness was, in his opinion, owing "principally to the hard work and the over-"work in the trenches and on picket; exposure to "damp and wet; over-exertion in short."¶ "Over-"work during the night," says Sir De Lacy Evans, "was decidedly the main cause of the sufferings of "the troops."** Unfortunately, this overwork was, it would seem, inevitable. "The British army," says the Committee, "was a portion of an allied "force. The whole scheme of the siege, the extent "of front to be defended, the positions to be main-"tained, and the works to be undertaken, depended "on military considerations, and were decided upon "in conjunction with our allies."

It cannot be doubted that the duties of the men in the trenches and on picket were unusually severe,

* 17176. † 17167. ‡ 17177. § 17160.
‖ 17154, 5. ¶ 1323. ** 791.

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but the severity of those duties would not alone account for their condition. According to Captain Hillyar, the naval brigade had three nights in bed for one of duty, and the troops had two nights' rest for one on duty. Now, although the labours of our sailors who formed the naval brigade were less arduous, they were nevertheless not so light as to account for the absence of ill health which they continued to enjoy, if the sickness of the army was owing wholly to hard work. The fact is,—and it is dishonest to conceal or disguise it—our soldiers contributed much to their own misery by their helplessness, and by their utter disregard of their health and comfort. In the first place, they used sometimes to march off to the trenches without having eaten their breakfasts or dinners. It is said, that they have been known to eat their salt meat raw,* and those who have seen with what gusto slices of *schinken* are devoured in Holland and Germany, will not find it difficult to believe the assertion, although it rests on the evidence of a gentleman who had seen in the cavalry camp, that "all the manes and tails were eaten off." †

Carelessness as much as fatigue indisposed them to search for fuel. The contrast in this respect between the British and French soldier was striking and painful. From the earliest dawn till dark, the latter might be seen in quest of wood. Here, a Zouave was perched half way up one of the few trees re-

* 17169, 70. † Mr. Clay, 2807.

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maining in Balaklava, and hacking at a branch with a diminutive hatchet. There was a Chasseur grubbing up a scrubby bush on the steep face of the cliff. Elsewhere another soldier was fishing up the chips and scraps which had been thrown overboard, floating near the water's edge. Rarely was a red coat to be seen engaged in a similar pursuit.

The first, second, and light Divisions could easily procure their supplies from the ground on which the battle of Inkermann was fought, once an oak forest. But the men often preferred being without fire to making the exertion of cutting down the underwood or digging up the roots which were to be got in abundance. The fatiguing labours of the trenches certainly excused to some extent this disinclination, but many a soldier who would not take the trouble of collecting fuel enough for cooking his own dinner, found time and energy enough to procure it for those who would give him a glass of rum for the fruits of his labour. "They did not "seem to care much about eating their rations raw," said Mr. Clay, "they seemed to care about nothing, "except about their rum."* The difficulty of cooking their victuals was increased by the loss of the camp kettles, which had been distributed in the proportion of one for five or six men. These the soldiers had thrown away in quantities on the march from Old Fort.† They were, in consequence, compelled to dress their food in their canteens, and each

* 3227. † 4264.

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man to cook for himself.* Their want of skill in this useful art was another cause of their wretchedness. While his French comrade converted his ration of salt pork into a savoury mess, the helpless Saxon knew scarcely how to render his portion eatable.

It was owing to this combination of ignorance, indolence, and disregard of health that the unfortunate men started for their work unfed. What strength of constitution could withstand twelve hours' labour under such circumstances? Is it surprising that they returned to the camp in the last stage of exhaustion? And when they did return, weary, cold, wet perhaps, it was to seek shelter in a tent which they had taken no pains to render habitable. No trench to divert the rain water, which was suffered to penetrate within the canvas, had been dug around it. No steps had been taken to remove the mud which was carried in on the men's shoes, nor to litter the ground with brush wood, or any other material within reach. Straw was actually rejected in the hospital tents, because it harboured the vermin with which the men were infected.† In these wretched abodes they lay down to rest, in their full dress and great coats—in their wet boots even. Few of them had undressed since they had landed in the Crimea. Many of those who had formed part of the army at the time of the invasion had—whether in pursuance of orders or at their own option, appears uncertain,‡—left their knapsacks on board, and were without

* 4281. † 11547. ‡ 767-71, 1172, 3802.

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underclothing, until the supplies sent out in the Jura and other ships had reached them. Filth indescribable, vermin unutterable, frost bites and dysentery were the consequences.

If it be thought that too much importance is attached to these circumstances, let it be borne in mind that it was precisely in these respects that the French soldiers and English sailors excelled our troops. While their food was equally good and abundant, while the tents were equally wind and water tight or even more so, while there was no material difference in their clothing, and while their labour was not very much greater, their meals were much worse cooked and more irregularly served, and the cleanliness of their persons and tents less attended to than in the naval brigade and French camp. While each English soldier cooked for himself,* the sailors "had a system of making two "cooks for a whole ship's company," or "made a cook for each tent, who was responsible for the "victuals being cooked."† While the soldier devoured his pork raw,‡ his French comrade cooked his ration, with the herbs which he managed to collect, into two or three savoury dishes.§ While our soldiers went to work fasting, the sailors when they returned from the trenches, always found their supper or dinner cooked for them.‖ If further proof were needed that here lay the ultimate cause of so

* Lieut.-Col. Wilson, 4281. † Capt Hillyar, 17173.
‡ Clay. § Layard, 4279; Wilson, 2618. ‖ 17173.

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much sickness, it would be found in the fact that the health of the men improved as soon as their officers turned their attention to the evil, and began to enforce regularity of meals and cleanliness.

It is true, the tents were colder than wooden huts. It is true, for a short time, warmer clothing was needed. It is true, the meat was generally salt, and vegetables were almost unknown in the camp for a couple of months. But what would huts, and sheepskins, and furs have availed—what would have availed fresh meat and vegetables to men who were so helpless, or so reckless, as to descend into the trenches with empty stomachs, and to prefer the chances of frost bite, fever, and vermin, to the trouble of attending to the comfort and cleanliness of their habitations and persons? The human machine was over-worked no doubt, but the injury which it sustained would have been comparatively trifling, if it had been kept in proper gear. The men sank under exhaustion, but the exhaustion was not the result of excessive toil alone. It was the result of toil operating on frames debilitated by neglect. Labour produced fatigue, fatigue led to neglect, and neglect unfitted the men for encountering labour which, under other circumstances, would not have over-taxed their strength. Thus, these causes acted and reacted on each other in a circle, and their evil consequences were not checked until the circle was broken by putting an end to that neglect which had given to over-work so many victims.

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And shall it now be insisted that the Government was to blame for the sufferings arising from these causes? Was it in the power of the Duke of Newcastle, sitting in Whitehall Gardens, to introduce regularity and cleanliness into the tents which covered the heights before Sebastopol? It may be said that he ought to have put an end to the excessive toil, by sending out more men to share those labours which incapacitated or indisposed the troops from collecting wood, cooking their meals, and improving the condition of their tents. Did the Duke of Newcastle hesitate to send all the forces at his disposal? Were not some 10,000 men sent out within a month or six weeks after the battle of Inkermann? The objection that they arrived in driblets,* is, in truth, nothing more than an admission that they were sent as fast as the means of transport and other circumstances admitted. But let those who complain of neglect in this respect, look back to the means which were resorted to by the late Government; and let them indicate, if they can, what resources were left unexhausted short of impressment or conscription. Let them look back, also, to the conduct of their political adversaries on the Foreign Enlistment Bill. Parties are never nice in their choice of weapons; but they must, in the end, put some limit to the practice of blowing hot and cold. Let the opponents of the late Government boast, if they please, of their triumph in

* Colonel Lindsay, 4204.

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impeding the levy of a Foreign Legion, but let them not, in the same breath, attack it for having neglected to send reinforcements to the trenches.

When the lamentable state of affairs in the camp became known at home, the Duke of Newcastle adopted a course which may be regarded as a new step in the art of war. He struck straight and quickly at the root of the evil. By inevitable misfortune, or by neglect, the English army had been exposed to much suffering by the want of a road. Thanks to the energy of the Minister who watched over its welfare, it is the first army that can boast of having a railway in its train. But "you ought not to have waited for Mr. Peto's offer," said Sir Bulwer Lytton, last January. He did not wait for it. Mr. Peto did not volunteer, but was summoned to give his assistance, and the world knows how promptly and disinterestedly the great railway contractor responded to the call. The Duke also organised a land transport corps; and, to place the army in close correspondence with home, he laid an electric telegraph across the Black Sea.

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XVII.

THE MEDICAL DEPARTMENT.—HOSPITAL STAFF AND SUPPLIES.

There still remains one branch of the subject matter before the Committee which requires notice. The inquiry into the treatment of the sick and wounded men of our army during the late campaign, was on every account the most painful, if not the most important portion of its task. It was the subject on which the neglect and incapacity of the Government were alleged to have been the grossest. It was a topic on which the world felt keenly, and which for the sake of the future well-being of our men, as well as of the character of our ministers and of the medical department of the army, imperatively demanded a thoroughly searching investigation. It was a matter respecting which Mr. Roebuck wished the Committee to declare that "the administration and "those in authority had signally failed to perform "their duty." And yet, there is no part of the whole inquiry which reflects less credit on either the judicial impartiality, or the judicial skill of the body to which it was entrusted. With a great show of zeal, Messrs. Roebuck and Layard examined at great length three gentlemen who had visited the hospitals at Scutari as amateurs,* and gravely ques-

* Messrs. Stafford, Macdonald and Osborne.

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tioned them on points on which it was impossible that they could possess any trustworthy information. With a great show of indignation, they cross-examined Dr. A. Smith, the Director-General, respecting the alleged mismanagement of establishments, which were a couple of thousand miles away, and of which he could know nothing but from the reports of others. With a great show of impartiality, they put into the witness box two surgeons who knew nothing of the hospitals at Scutari, as one of them was there for only ten days in January,* and the other had not set foot in the place since the preceding month of June.† With great triumph they harassed and bewildered the quiet, diffident surgeon,‡ who had had the misfortune to be placed at the head of the hospital, and whose evidence soon shewed, that under the burthen of a duty to which he was altogether unequal, he had remained in almost entire ignorance of the real condition of the establishments placed under his care. And when at last they found in one of the Hospital Commissioners§ a witness who was able to give them exact information on the subject matter of their inquiry, they first tried to bully him also, and when that course failed, they suddenly "postponed" his examination, and never resumed it.

Although it was repeatedly asserted that the hospitals at Scutari and in the camp were not

* Dr. Forrest. † Dr. Dumbreck. ‡ Dr. Menzies.
§ Mr. Maxwell.

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sufficiently supplied with surgeons, they never attempted to test the truth of the representation by calling for a return of the number of medical officers on duty there, from day to day, or week to week, and of the number of patients, daily or weekly admitted and discharged. Although they were informed that the provision of medicines and surgical appliances had been shamefully deficient in quantity and variety, they never called for a list of the articles actually sent out. Although they had been told that the horrors of the passage from Balaklava to Scutari rivalled those of the Middle Passage, they never attempted to procure any information as to the supply of the transports with furniture, clothing, utensils, medicines, comforts, or provisions. Although they readily received the testimony, or rather the belief, of visitors as to the want of medical comforts at Scutari, they never demanded any account of the actual daily consumption of food and drink there. Although they heard with complacency the most cruel imputations of neglect and misconduct against the Purveyor, they never gave that officer an opportunity of explaining his conduct, although he was in England. In short, almost every branch of this important subject they left with little or no rational investigation, although the Committee wasted many days in collecting vague assertions and confident accusations touching it.

Enough evidence, however, is before the public

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to shew what the true state of our military hospitals was, since the invasion of the Crimea. The report of the Commisioners who were sent to the East by the Government, for the purpose of inquiring into the condition of those establishments, fortunately affords the means, not merely of filling up the numerous blanks left by the Committee, but of testing the value of the evidence given before them, and of exposing the falsehood of many of the stories which were in circulation during the winter. By the light of that report, as well as of the evidence collected in Mr. Roebuck's big books, a tolerably correct opinion may be formed of the state of the sick and wounded, and of the conduct of the Ministers and departments concerned in providing for their wants.

In the first place, then, with respect to the supply of medical attendance for the army, it appears that as soon as the Eastern expedition was resolved on, the Duke of Newcastle turned his attention to the medical wants of the men whom he was about to send abroad. The number of surgeons of a peace establishment—two to each regiment—did not suffice, he thought, to meet the exigencies of war, and it was therefore necessary to increase the medical force. A question here arose *in limine*, whether the additional surgeons should be attached to the staff, or be distributed among the regiments. Dr. Guthrie proposed the latter course; Dr. Andrew Smith preferred the former. This difference

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of the doctors was decided by the Duke of Newcastle in a manner which showed that he thought more of the welfare of the troops than of pounds shillings and pence. He doubled the number of the regimental surgeons, and he added largely to the staff. "The army, when sent to the East," the Committee might truly say, "had a greater "number in proportion to the number of the "troops than ever before accompanied a British army." The staff consisted, at the end of February, 1854, for the 25,000 men then ordered out, of 1 Inspector-General, 4 Deputy-Inspectors, 12 first-class, and as many second-class staff-surgeons, and 70 assistant-surgeons, besides purveyors, apothecaries, and clerks.* As the army increased, the staff received fresh additions, and when army surgeons were no longer procurable, civilians were employed. The total number of medical officers, including apothecaries, dispensers and dressers sent to Turkey, from the commencement of the war to March last, was 529.† As one of the popular fables of the day represented that many of them had attained an age which rendered them unfit for their duties, it may not be superfluous to state here, that of the whole number only one had attained the age of sixty-two, and only 13 had reached or passed their fiftieth year.‡ The Committee did no more than justice to this admirable body of men,

* 2nd Rep. App. 691.

† 2nd Rep. App. p. 695. ‡ Id., p. 694.

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in recording that "the witnesses generally concurred in testifying to their zeal and efficiency."

Under ordinary circumstances, the number of surgeons employed would have been more than ample. Indeed, were the reform in fashion "financial" instead of "Administrative," the public would probably have heard more of the extravagance, than of the neglect of the Minister who had ventured to attach four surgeons to regiments of 800 men, while the French, setting us an example in economy, were satisfied to send their regiments of 3000 men into the field with only three surgeons. However, although the sickness in the camp made the demands on the medical service very heavy, it appears that they were, upon the whole, adequately met. Although the Committee assert that "some regiments" had not, after the battles of Alma and Inkermann, "the requisite number of medical men," it is not easy to discover upon what evidence they arrived at this conclusion. The Hospital Commissioners report, that, except in two regiments, where the number of surgeons was, owing to some temporary or accidental circumstance, defective for a short time, they found the medical attendance in the field sufficient, notwithstanding that sickness and detachment on duty had thinned the ranks of the regimental surgeons.* And if they thought that the number of medical officers sent down to the Bosphorus with sick, on board of transport

* Rep. Hosp. Comm. 10.

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ships, were in a few cases insufficient, the wholly exceptional character of that duty must be taken into consideration before the Government can be justly condemned of neglect to meet its demands fully. It will presently be seen how far the number employed at Scutari was adequate for the performance of the duties of that place.

Besides surgeons and apothecaries, other attendants were needed. It is perhaps not generally known that our armies have never had a regularly organised ambulance corps. Although the French had, as early as their first campaign in Egypt, set the civilized world an example in this respect, by establishing a body of men and camels especially devoted to the transport of their sick and wounded, the English armies continued, until the end of the Peninsular war, without any adequate means of removing their disabled men. The bandsmen carried their comrades off the field on stretchers, and their further transport depended on what the country casually supplied. With the return of peace, the question was no longer how the army might be made efficient, but to how low a figure the expense of its maintenance might be reduced; and the spirit which called for the dissolution of the waggon train of the Duke of Wellington's last campaigns, was not likely to tolerate, much less recommend, the addition of an hospital corps to our peace establishment. It is, therefore, but just to note that it was not until the Duke of Newcastle was Minister for War, that the

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first step was taken to meet the demands of humanity on behalf of our wounded men. "I was, "in fact," he might well assert with pride, "the "person who originated the establishment of the "ambulance corps, in consequence of the communi- "cation which I received from Dr. Guthrie."* Dr. Andrew Smith also suggested the adoption of this step as early as the 18th of February, 1854.† Vehicles were designed by both these gentlemen, and a number of pensioners were specially enrolled for this new service. If this first attempt was not crowned with success, it hardly merits the sentence of "entire failure," which the Committee has passed upon it. The pensioners may not have been as efficient as they were expected to be. Dr. Guthrie's carriages may have proved too rickety,‡ and Dr. Smith's too heavy,§ but the latter, beyond question, did good service on the day of Inkermann, and generally in the Crimea, until the roads became impassable.‖ The men seem to have been voted inefficient by common consent,¶ but probably they have had but scanty justice done them. "They undoubtedly "failed," says the Duke of Newcastle, "but I think "it only fair to the men to say, that I do not consi- "der the failure was so complete, or that they were "so much to blame as has been represented. It has "been charged against them, that they were ex-

* 14989. † 18218.

‡ See Dr. Hall's evidence, Rep. Hosp. Com. App. p. 340.

§ Rep. Hosp. Com. p. 5. ‖ Id. ¶ Id.

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" ceedingly ill-conducted, and constantly drunk,
" and so forth. There was one unfortunate occa-
" sion which brought them into great and deserved
" disrepute with the army, soon after they landed
" at Varna, when a considerable number miscon-
" ducted themselves and got drunk; I think nearly
" forty were reported, but I have looked through
" the offences of that corps, and I do not find, with
" that single exception, the amount of offences ex-
" ceeds the average amount with soldiers under
" similar circumstances. Again, as regards the
" selection, they were not those old men which has
" been stated; I believe that out of the whole, there
" were only two who exceeded fifty years of age.
" They were men who, of course, had been inva-
" lided under certain circumstances, but they were
" doubly examined with regard to their corporal
" fitness, and every precaution was taken. At the
" same time, I at once say, that the plan has not
" been successful, and it was an experiment which
" must never be repeated."*

So far, then, no neglect can be imputed to the Duke of Newcastle, or to Mr. Sidney Herbert, upon whom fell, in great measure, the duty of superintending the medical department In providing a supply of medicines and medical comforts, those Ministers pursued the only course which prudence could suggest. They consulted the Director General of the Medical Board, and some forty tons of

* 14992.

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medicines,* estimated to suffice for six months, was sent out in the first instance.† The medical officers who accompanied the expedition received instructions to replenish their stores by timely requisitions at home, or by purchasing on the spot. The Committee does not appear to have inquired what the medicines were, or what quantities of each kind were sent out. They have neither expressed any opinion as to the sufficiency of the supply, nor furnished the country with the means of forming any upon the point. But upon a perusal of the catalogue which was published by the medical department last autumn, no doubt can well be entertained as to the adequacy of the supply. The following returns, show the quantities of lint, linen, and other surgical appliances, and also of hospital furniture and clothing, which were sent to the East. They will probably rescue the Government from any charge of parsimony or negligence on those heads:—

* 16431. † 8117.

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ARTICLES.	1st Supply.	2nd Supply.	3rd Supply.	4th Supply.	5th Supply.	6th Supply.	7th Supply.	8th Supply.	9th Supply.	Totals.
Lint . . . . . lbs.	1000	1530	800	2234	5000	2500	5000	6000	2500	26,564
Old Linen . . sheets	200	300	180	—	900	600	—	1200	300	3680
Bandages, — Calico and Linen	15000	22000	—	—	—	40000	—	40000	—	117,500
Bandages,—Flannel . .	3900	5350	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	9250
Bandages,—18-Tailed . .	200	300	—	500	500	—	1000	500	500	3500
Calico for Bandages, yards	656	984	—	—	817	—	—	—	—	2457
Flannel for ditto, pieces	4	6	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	10
Adhesive Plaister, spread, yards	800	1200	700	1750	3100	—	5000	7000	1000	20,550
Emplastrum Resinæ, not spread . . . . lbs.	300	450	250	—	—	—	—	—	—	1000

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Return of Bedding, Beds, Clothing, &c., for Hospital Use with the Army Serving in the East.

Articles.	1st Supply.	2nd Supply. 12th July.	3rd Supply. 22nd June.	4th Supply. 21st Oct.	5th Supply. 4th Nov.	6th Supply. 15th Nov.	7th Supply. 18th Nov.	8th Supply. 28th Nov.	9th Supply. 29th Nov.	10th Supply. 8th Dec.	Total.
Bedding:—Blankets, single	10,404	..	3468	6000	..	..	150	..	..	..	20,022
Rugs	5202	..	1734	3000	..	..	100	..	..	..	10,036
Palliasses	5202	..	1734	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	6936
Bolster Cases	5202	..	1734	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	6936
Sheets (Linen)	15,606	..	5202	9000	..	..	150	..	..	..	19,958
Sheets (Cotton)	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	60,000	..	..	60,000
Mattrasses, hair	2040	..	680	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2720
Bolsters, hair	2040	..	680	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2720
Cases, Waterproof	1020	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1020
Beds, Air	61	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	61
Cushions, Air	195	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	195
Bedsteads	2550	1000	..	2167	2000	..	2283	..	..	..	10,000
Easy Chairs	..	..	..	..	..	50	..	..	..	..	50
Patent Close Stools	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	25	..	25
Common do.	480	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	500	980
Chamber-pots	3060	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	5000	8060
Bed-pans	510	..	..	..	..	..	..	100	..	500	1110
Urinals	133	..	..	..	..	..	..	100	..	500	733
Dresses, Woollen:—											
Gowns, Serge	3060	..	1020	1500	..	..	4420	..	..	..	10,000
Trowsers, do.	3060	..	1020	1500	..	..	4420	..	..	..	10,000
Waistcoats, do.	3060	..	1020	1500	..	..	4420	..	..	..	10,000
Caps, Worsted	3060	..	1020	1500	..	..	4420	..	..	..	10,000
Flannel Shirts	1530	..	510	1000	..	..	3000	..	..	..	6040
Socks, Worsted . . pairs	1530	..	510	1500	..	..	3000	60,000	..	..	66,040
Linen Shirts	1530	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	1530
Cotton Gowns	3060	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3060
,, Trowsers	3060	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3060
,, Waistcoats	3060	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3060
,, Caps	3060	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3060
,, Shirts (washed)	..	..	..	2000	..	..	..	60,000	..	..	62,000
Slippers, Leathern . . pairs	2550	..	850	2000	..	..	..	..	..	..	5400

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The following was the supply of some of the principal medical comforts which were sent out:—

RETURN OF SOME OF THE MEDICAL COMFORTS SUPPLIED FOR THE ARMY IN THE EAST SINCE THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE WAR, UP TO THE 22ND OF DECEMBER, 1854.*

Name of Vessel.	Date of Sailing.	Date of Vessel arriving at 1st Port of Destination.	Description of Article.								
			Port Wine.		Brandy.	Barley.	Sugar.	Tea.	Arrow-root.	Essence of Beef.	Sago.
			Gallons.	Dozen.	Gallons.	lbs.	lbs.	lbs.	lbs.	lbs.	lbs.
Bride . .	15 April . .	27 May, 1854	. .	100	50	560	1680	800	224	224	224
Balbec . .	2 May . .	27 May, 1854	. .	500	250	1120	3000	1400	448	896	448
Mauritius .	17 August .	20 Sep. 1854	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	. .	560	. .	1120
Vifredo . .	20 Sept. . .	1 Oct. 1854	. .	300	200	. .	2000	400	336	1120	448
Briton . .	28 Sept. . .	9 Nov. 1854	. .	300	. .	. .	5000	. .	896	. .	448
RobertLowe	28 Nov. . .	10 Jan. 1855	. .	600	200	. .	7000	400	1792	1120	2016
Brandon .	about14Nov.	1 Dec. 1854	. .	600	200	. .	7000	400	1792	1120	2016
Army&Navy	9 Dec. 1854	25 Jan. 1855	1380	300	350	3000	2458	2574	522	1000	655
Eagle . .	20 Jan. 1855	9 Feb. 1855	2280	300	. .	8000	2974	1053	560	1000	500
		Total	3660	3000	1250	12680	31112	7027	7130	6480	7875

* Extracted from the return in 3rd Rep. App. p. 462.

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XVIII.

ALMA—CHLOROFORM—TRANSPORT OF SICK AND WOUNDED—FIELD HOSPITALS.

Such were the steps taken for the medical service of the army. But from an early period complaints began to arise in connection with this department. At Varna, port wine and arrow-root could not be procured in sufficient quantities. The Light Division, which had advanced farther into the country than the rest of the army, was without a sufficient supply of medicines, and even the most necessary of hospital utensils were wanting in their marquees. There was mismanagement somewhere, it was evident. The Duke of Newcastle called upon Dr. Smith for an explanation. The Director General contented himself with unrolling the ample catalogue of the articles that had been sent out.* The Duke, fearing that they might have been misplaced, sent out a fresh supply,† and at the same time dispatched a number of experienced custom house officers to superintend the landing and warehousing of all stores transmitted to the army.‡

It is, however, from the invasion of the Crimea, that the administration of the medical department excited general animadversion. The ambulance waggons had been left at Varna, and the wounded of the Alma had been tardily removed

* 14628. † Id. ‡ 15072.

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from the field by means of jolting arabas, or the stretchers of bandsmen and sailors. The use of chloroform in operations had been barbarously interdicted. The sufferers had been crowded in excessive numbers on board ships, which were destitute not merely of accommodation for the men, but of medicines, bandages, and all the ordinary means of dressing their wounds. Finally, the patients were carried to a hideous charnel house at Scutari, where neglect and starvation were their lot, until they were consigned to a shallow grave. Such was the substance and burthen of the general complaints.

It is unquestionably true that the men who were struck down on the Alma heights were not removed as fast or as tenderly as all must have wished. The Government, however, was clearly not blamable for this. They had provided the army with an ambulance train, and they could not dictate to Lord Raglan how and when he should use it. The Commander-in-Chief must then be to blame, say those who are bent on "venting their rage" on somebody. But though that General has died without having had the opportunity of stating his reasons for leaving his waggons in Bulgaria, his vessels, it is clear, were occupied in a more pressing service. But, after all, the suffering caused by the absence of the ambulance waggons was far less general than has been supposed. They would have been far more comfortable than the arabas of the country, but beyond doubt, any species of wheel-vehicle, however well hung on

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springs, must have shaken its occupants more han a stretcher carried on men's shoulders. And here is every reason to believe that this was he mode of transport by which most of our nen were carried to the water's edge. Accord-ng to Sir De Lacy Evans, "there were very few 'carriages. We had got some Tartar carriages 'during the first three or four days, and the sailors "in our fleet were disembarked by the commanding "officers of the Navy, and most powerfully con-"tributed to relieve us from that painful burden of "taking down the wounded to the ships."* The sufferers from the want of ambulance vans were those who were transported in the arabas; and they were the men whose wounds were the least severe.†

Some delay occurred in giving all the wounded the succour which their condition required. But here again, it is not easy to see how the Duke of Newcastle or the Medical Board were to blame. Dr. Hall states that the surgeons under him were sufficient in number, and that some of them con-tinued their terrible labours until late in the night after the engagement. "The first Division," he adds, "had all their wounded collected and under "cover in houses in a vineyard, on the night of the "20th. A great many men of the other Divisions "were also collected the same evening; the rest next "day."‡ "The whole of the wounded," he says else-

* 434. † Rep. Hosp. Com. p. 339.

‡ Rep. Hosp. Com. p. 339.

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where, " were dressed and sent on board ship by the " evening of the 22nd." But the French managed better, it may be observed by people whose humanity is quickened by the spirit of rivalry. True, but for the very simple reason given by Sir De Lacy Evans. Their wounded were far less numerous, and were close to their ships.* They had but few to carry, and but a short distance to carry them, while our wounded were about 1600 in number, and were four miles from the sea.

As to chloroform, it was universally used, notwithstanding its supposed prohibition. It is, in truth, difficult to repress a smile when the grounds of the general exasperation against Dr. Hall upon this subject are examined; for the instructions to his subordinate officers which were so indignantly condemned for their ferocity, turn out, when calmly weighed, to be but the suggestions of a humane caution. Dr. Hall, it appears, was fearful that the use of chloroform might be fatal, if applied while the patient was sunk in that death-like torpor which follows serious gun-shot wounds, and it was against the incautious application of chloroform at that critical stage that he protested. His language clearly points to those cases only. " Dr. Hall takes this " opportunity," he says, " of cautioning medical " officers against the use of chloroform, *in the severe* " *shock of serious gun-shot wounds,* as he thinks few " will survive where it is used."† Such an opinion

* 438. † Rep. Hosp. Com. 56.

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may be erroneous—it may be unphilosophical—it may be ridiculous even. But shall it be condemned as inhuman by people who would tremble to apply the marvellous agent to themselves, except when their fear of it was conquered by their greater fear of pain—by men who cannot be induced to sanction its employment on their wives in child-birth. Surely Cant is not on the decline when the same persons who have complacently hearkened to the preacher's thunders against the siufulness of exempting women from the severest of sufferings, and have gravely shaken their heads at the rumour that these denunciations had been disregarded in high places, choose to fall foul of an army surgeon, for recommending caution in the use of chloroform in a certain class of cases, in which its effect had not yet been tried. Many persons were, it is true, shocked at the alternative presented to them by Dr. Hall's declaration, that "however "barbarous it may appear, the smart of the knife "is a powerful stimulant, and it is much better to "hear a man bawl lustily, than to see him sink "silently into the grave;"* but coarseand repulsive as these expressions may be, they must be left to more rose-water writers to polish and refine them. The picture is true to nature, but the subject is horrible, and no artifice of language can veil its horrors without veiling the truth.

It has been objected that no hospital ships were provided for the removal of the wounded from the

* Id.

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Crimea to Scutari; but this objection is not altogether well founded. When the army proceeded on the expedition, two steam vessels, the "Andes" and the "Cambria," were, by Dr. Hall's advice, fitted up as hospital ships, with the view of accommodating any men who might be wounded, if the Russians opposed the landing.* It is true, these vessels proved insufficient for the reception of all the soldiers who had been injured at the battle of the Alma; and other ships were consequently put into requisition for the purpose. That the unfortunate men were on this, as on some subsequent occasions overcrowded, that they were sent to sea unprovided with sufficient orderlies to attend to their wants, that the supply of hospital furniture and utensils was in some instances defective, that the means of cooking the men's meals and articles of light diet were insufficient, and that the surgeons on board were not always numerous enough to attend to every patient, appears clearly from the evidence collected by the Hospital Commission. But before compassion for the sufferings which resulted from these deficiencies, is converted into unreasoning indignation against anybody and everybody proximately or remotely connected with the conduct of the expedition, it may be as well to bear in mind the position of the army at the period in question. It was by no means so secure as to admit of the weakening of the medical force

* Rep. Hosp. Com. p. 340.

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or the means of retreat more than was most urgently necessary. The Belbek and the Katcha had not yet been crossed, and those who recollect the precipitous heights which command the left banks of those rivers, will be the last to deny that if the Russian army had awaited the invader there, after its defeat on the Alma, the further progress of the allied forces might have been arrested or at least delayed. And if they had met with a reverse, or even have been compelled to fight another battle on the road to Sebastopol, what would have been said of a General who had sent away a single ship or surgeon more than the direst necessity required? Should we have had no sneers at the spurious humanity which was so absorbed with the sufferings of the wounded, as to risk the safety of the whole army? It may be urged that the number of transports should have been greater; but the resources even of this country are not inexhaustible; and suitable vessels could not, according to Admiral Dundas, have been obtained at Constantinople.* It is easy to assert that hospital ships should have been prepared and sent out from England. "I must say," observes Sir J. Graham, "that I exerted myself to "the utmost, with the ablest assistants that a man "ever possessed, and that I exhausted the means of "transport."† But even if a larger number of vessels could have been placed at the disposal of our naval and military commanders, it may be doubted

* 20498, 9. † 21118.

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whether it would not have been found necessary to employ them for more pressing services than hospital purposes. In truth, all that the vessels needed, in order to fit them for the reception of the wounded, was a number of berths; and these could be, as they subsequently were, made and fitted at Constantinople. On the 25th October, orders were sent out to make these preparations,* and if they were not then made immediately, no blame attaches to the Government, but to those who neglected their orders,—a point on which the report of the Committee has thrown no light.

Compared with the French soldiers, our men were in comfort. They had at least the advantage of being carried in the holds of large merchant steamers, or of sailing vessels towed by steamers, and not upon the decks of men-of-war like their French comrades. But while the deficient arrangements for the comfort of our sick and wounded are thus plainly indicated and admitted, it is but right to observe that the supplies of medicines, medical comforts, provisions, and water, were rarely deficient on board the vessels which carried the sick and wounded to Scutari. Mr. Sidney Godolphin Osborne, indeed, assured the Committee that "there was an admitted deficiency of medical comforts"† on board, but certainly that admission did not come from those who were the most likely to have cognisance of the fact. The surgeons who were in me-

* 21136. † 20498.

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dical charge of the sick and wounded during the voyage, rarely complained of any such want. Of the forty-three who answered the inquiries of the Hospital Commissioners upon this point, four only represented the medical comforts as insufficient;* and the tone of the communications of the medical officers of the army to that Commission, shews that they were not in the humour to conceal or extenuate the evils which they witnessed. Mattresses were often wanting, but most persons suffering from diarrhœa or dysentery would be inclined to reject such an accommodation; and men who had been lying for months on the bare ground, were certainly not as acutely sensible, as professional humanitarians, of the hardship which they endured from this cause.

The general absence of complaint, among the men, of their treatment on board these vessels, is, in itself, no trifling proof that the wretchedness of the accommodation provided for them on board, was greatly exaggerated by some feather-bed philanthropists, who would have found materials for their declamation even in the want of bed-curtains. Those who are best acquainted with the disposition of our soldiers, know that they are not habitually silent under ill-treatment; and their passive acquiescence in the state of things which Mr. Osborne's vivid imagination likened to the horrors of the Middle Passage, was so striking that it

* Rep. Hosp. Com. 19.

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astonished their most zealous sympathisers. Mr. Stafford explained their patient endurance by a theory of his own. They were very reserved to him at first, he told the Committee, because they thought he was making a case for the Hospital;* but when they discovered their mistake, they expressed their indignation in the most unmeasured terms.†

Now, it is very remarkable that none of this indignation should have been brought before the Committee. There were plenty of invalided guardsmen, and horsemen, and soldiers of every arm, in or near London, who might have been brought before them to tell of "the horrors of the Middle Passage." And yet, only one soldier was examined — Sergeant Dawson, who was wounded at the battle of Inkerman. His examination on the subject was not long, "Were you well attended to on board ship?" he was asked. "We certainly were very well attended," was his answer. "Were you well attended to in the "Hospital?"—"Yes, I met with very kind treat-"ment from Dr. Houlton." "And were you well "attended to the whole way home?"—"Yes, we "had very good accommodation."‡ What could the prosecuting members of the Committee make of such a witness as this? It must have shocked them much to see a man so callous to his own sufferings.

The indignation which was expressed to Mr. Stafford, is, in truth, susceptible of an explanation

* 7581. † 7583. ‡ 5513-9.

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of which he never dreamed. Mr. Osborne has unintentionally given us the key of it, in that modest little blue book in which he has recorded his own Samaritan deeds at Scutari. That singular publication is certainly more remarkable for its pictures than its facts; for, with the exception of poor "Smith of Leeds'" splint, and the author's surgical, clerical, and philanthropical exploits, the materials of which it consists are most provokingly intangible generalities. But it does contain one little fact worth noticing. After stating how the writer, with the aid of his son and Mr. Stafford, had resolved to write letters for the soldiers to their friends at home, and how many letters were accordingly written, stamped, and posted, Mr. Osborne adds: "Whenever it appeared advisable to do so, "we sent a cheque from our private fund on a "London firm, for the relatives of any poor fellow, "whose dying moments it was likely to cheer; the "sum varying from ten shillings to two pounds. I "found a most zealous assistant in this work in "my friend Mr. Stafford; day by day he might "be seen with his portfolio by the side of the poor "sufferers, giving many hours to the task."*

Can any reasonable doubt exist as to the sudden transition of the men from sullen silence to graphic denunciation? There was a gentleman—the word, depend upon it, was passed quickly round from one end of the hospital to the other—who devoted his

* Scutari and its Hospitals, p. 15.

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days in kindly writing letters for all who desired to communicate with their friends at home, and who had always a sovereign or two to enclose to a mother, sister, or wife, as often as his feelings were well wrought upon by a tale of woe and horror. Is it strange that such tales should be forthcoming accordingly? This explanation may not be very flattering to Mr. Stafford's shrewdness, or consistent with the chivalrous honour of his protégés. But let those who know what soldiers are, deny its probable truth, if they can. Let those who do not know them, contrast the indignation which they expressed to Mr. Stafford, with the manly and touching simplicity of the statements made to the Hospital Commissioners on the same subject, by the soldiers whom they examined. The men endured their sufferings like men. They knew that these were mostly inevitable, and instead of giving way to querulousness, they cheerfully made every allowance for the difficulties of their situation.

The condition of the sick and wounded in the field during the winter, was unquestionably as deplorable as can be conceived; and the Committee have therefore contented themselves with referring to the description given by the Hospital Commissioners, instead of giving any of their own. But here, again, the Ministry at home were not in fault. The habitations in which they were placed—marquees and bell tents—were miserable; but it is unnecessary to repeat what has been already stated

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with respect to the tardy arrival of huts in the camp. If wooden houses, and woollens, and buffalo robes, and sheepskins, did not arrive as soon as they were needed, it was partly because no reasonable foresight could have anticipated that they would be required, and partly because the means of carrying them to the heights had failed. In this respect, however, let it not be imagined that our allies were much better off than ourselves. They may have been very busy during Mr. Layard's brief stay in the Crimea, in erecting with planks those "large houses,"* which he describes with so much admiration and envy; but certainly, at a later period, the French sick were chiefly collected in mere tents. In their army, all cases except those of the slightest description, are at once sent to the Ambulance, or Staff Hospital, attached to head-quarters; and round General Canrobert's hut, there stood last winter, one hundred and twenty tents, each calculated to contain ten patients. In addition to these, there were about a dozen, not "large houses," but huts of Turkish construction, excavated some four or five feet deep in the ground, and roofed in, each large enough for ten or twelve men.

The want of medicines and medical comforts, which undoubtedly prevailed in the camp, was evidently owing to some mismanagement, accident, or misconduct, on the spot.† When the army left

* 2587. † Rep. Hosp. Com. 12.

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Turkey for the Crimea, Scutari was made the depôt of all hospital stores destined for the army;* and when the supplies in the camp required replenishment, it was the duty of the principal medical officer to draw fresh supplies from Scutari. It appears from the evidence of Dr. Hall, and of the Apothecary and Purveyor at Balaklava, that requisitions were sent on two or three occasions to the authorities on the Bosphorus, and were either wholly disregarded, or but very imperfectly complied with. When 50 lbs. of opium, for instance, were demanded, five were sent.† On which of the officials falls the responsibility of all the terrible consequences of this dearth of medical supplies, does not appear. Assuredly, no punishment can be an adequate retribution for his offence; but here, as in many other instances, Mr. Roebuck's inquiry proved wholly futile and abortive. The witnesses, and the parties implicated, were out of the country, and those who looked to the Committee as a tribunal, which was to expose not merely misdeeds, but culprits also, have been disappointed.

* 13259. † Rep. Hosp. Com. App. 341.

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XII.

SCUTARI—MEASURES OF THE GOVERNMENT—THE AMBASSADOR—THE COMMISSION—THE NURSES.

With respect to the condition of the Hospitals at Scutari, so much has been written and spoken about them, so much has been affirmed and denied, so much has been said in exaggeration and extenuation, that it is no easy matter to form a correct notion of the true state of those establishments, last winter. The materials for forming an exact opinion are wanting. The inquiry of the Committee was wholly illusory, and the fuller details which have been laid before the world by the Hospital Commisioners are far from complete. But although it is not possible to arrive at the exact truth in the absence of evidence, and in the midst of so much assertion and contradiction, there can be no difficulty in deciding how far the Government was to blame for the evils of which Scutari was said to have been the scene.

It would be a long and wearisome task to rake up all the charges which have been brought against the Hospitals on the Bosphorus. The first rumour that went forth against them asserted that they were destitute of linen and lint to bind the wounds of our disabled soldiers. It soon went abroad that the number of surgeons in attendance on the poor men was shamefully deficient. Then came the report

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that no medicines were to be had in the place, and that not only were such luxuries as sago and arrow-root, and such necessary stimulants and restoratives as brandy and port, unknown in the place, but that even the commonest articles of diet were wanting. In short, the huge barrack of Scutari was represented as a horrible dungeon, in which mangled and shattered men, stern and uncomplaining, as heroic in suffering as in action, lay rotting helplessly, sinking under festering wounds, unheeded fevers, filth and starvation.

Assume that these hideous visions were faithful reflections of the truth. Allow that they were neither conjured up by the arts of the charlatan, nor coloured by a heated imagination. Does it follow that the Duke of Newcastle or Mr. Sidney Herbert was to blame? That depends on the answer to be given to another question—Did they neglect any means in their power to provide the hospitals with all the requisites of a well-conducted establishment? It may be very pleasant and convenient for those who want, not to punish a culprit, but to sacrifice a victim, to preach the plenary and unlimited responsibility of Ministers for the misdeeds of every subordinate, but justice disowns the doctrine, and the public will disown it too.

Let us see, then, what was done by the authorities at home, when the reports above referred to reached them. After having sent out enormous supplies of old linen and lint, the Duke of New-

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castle might well feel astounded at the intelligence that those articles were not forthcoming on the morrow of the first action. But he did not turn a deaf ear to the rumour, however incredulous he might be of its truth. He immediately sent a telegraphic message to Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, requesting him, "in communication and in concert with the "medical authorities, to obtain for the sufferers "whatever Constantinople or its neighbourhood can "supply, in the way of comforts or sustenance," and "to report at the earliest moment, what further "assistance may be required from England to supply "any local deficiencies, in order that no time may be "lost in sending stores, or other articles which may "be wanted, from this country."* The Committee has objected that this course was mischievous rather than useful, because introducing an element of confusion in the administration of the hospitals. Why was not full power, it is asked, given to the caterers of the establishment to procure in the market what they required, and to draw, in the ordinary way, on the Commissariat for the necessary funds? This power was given to them;† and further, they were repeatedly urged to exercise it. "Recollect," says Mr. S. Herbert, in one of his numerous letters to Mr. Wreford the Purveyor-in-Chief, "that your "business is to promote efficiency. No cost can be "put in competition with the safety and comfort of "the sick. Lord Stratford has an unlimited power

* 2nd Rep. App. 697. † 19851.

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"as to money; and the authorities of the hospital "have an unlimited authority to procure all that is "necessary . . . I must repeat what I have "said before, and what I cannot too strongly impress "on you, your first duty is to take care that nothing "is wanted in the hospital. The mere checking of "expenditure is all very well in peace. In war it is "secondary to the first and great object, efficiency at "any price."* "If things are wanted," he says to Major Sillery, the Commandant, "they must be "got. You are away from England, and a letter "takes a month to get an answer; no reference "home, therefore, is possible when time presses. If "the stores are at Varna, and you can get others at "Constantinople, they must be got. If you want "more interpreters, you should get them; we can- "not find them here, but you can find them at Con- "stantinople. As Commandant of the hospital, it "is your duty to see that no department in it is "wanting . . . . . The object you should "have in view is to create perfect efficiency; "checking expenditure is a secondary considera- "tion. No cost can be put for one moment in "competition with the comfort and safety of the "sick and wounded. I trust, therefore, you will not "only act upon this yourself, but enforce the same "energy upon others. If your staff is insufficient "and you can augment it on the spot, do so, and "report it. I shall approve of your proceeding. If

* 19821.

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" other departments require strengthening, and you " are satisfied of it, and you can get additional " strength on the spot, do so; but, above all, be " ready for a fresh influx of wounded. If buildings " are wanted, lose no time in applying to Lord " Stratford. If sheds are wanted, or store rooms, " let them be at once constructed. If the landing-" place, or pier wants repair or extension, let it be " done. Let everything be efficient. I apprehend " that Constantinople is deficient neither in wood " nor carpenters, and that sheds, bed-tressels, and " anything of that description can be got there " without difficulty. I hear that Miss Nightin-" gale has started a washing establishment outside " the hospital; I am very glad to hear it. The " expenses, of course, will be provided by the " Government. I can only again urge in conclusion " that every effort may be made, every necessary " expenditure incurred, and every co-operation " between departments insisted upon, in order that " the hospital shall afford to all the sick or wounded " that may be sent to it, every accommodation and " comfort which can be procured for them."*

But if the ordinary caterers of the establishments had power to purchase what was necessary, and to draw on the Commissariat for the requisite funds, why were two purses offered to them? It was " injudicious," because " if the division and uncer-" tainty of responsibility was a serious evil, the

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"evil could only be increased by the interference "of another authority, having neither relation to "nor connection with our military administration." This is the opinion of the Committee. But what is the explanation given by the late Government? "I think it was the feeling of the Duke of New- "castle," says Mr. Sidney Herbert, "that the fear "of responsibility in those subordinate officers was "so great, that it would be impossible to get them "to draw money, and apply it, unless the interven- "tion of Lord Stratford de Redcliffe took place. ". . . It was not a divided authority, nor the "introduction of two authorities, so much as the "introduction of two sources for the supply of "money. It gave them a second banker; nor did "any confusion ensue, for though the authorities "never drew on Lord Stratford, yet, no doubt, his "interference quickened their action, for they sub- "sequently incurred all the necessary expenditure; "drawing, as was quite regular, on the Com- "missariat."

The truth is, that during the 40 years' peace, "the checking of expenditure," to borrow Mr. Herbert's words,* "was the most essential duty" of the officers in charge of military hospitals. The screw had been put, in deference to public opinion, upon the medical as well as upon every other branch of the army, to a degree of pressure which ought to have satisfied the most Archi-

* 19814.

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medean reformer. Dr. Smith, the head of the medical department, described vividly the effect of the system upon himself. "Until the war broke out," he told the Committee, "I had for 40 years "been nursed to save money, not to spend it; and "when I found, on this war coming on, that the coun- "try was liberal, and that I dared to spend money, I "felt that the screw had been so tightly applied to "me, that I could not believe myself, when I knew "that I could spend money without going through "the regular forms; and it was months before I could "convince myself that I had that power vested in "me."† If supplies were wanting in the hospital, while its chief officers had authority to procure everything that was required, it could arise only from that fear of spending the public money, which they had acquired by long habit. It was to obviate the evil consequences of this inveterate timidity, that the Duke of Newcastle requested the aid of Lord Stratford. Though the medical officers and purveyors tremble at the thought of going into the market,—though they shudder at the idea of drawing a bill on the Treasury, they will not, he may naturally have thought, hesitate to supply their wants by means which do not involve pecuniary responsibility. Buy what you want, he said to them in effect, or if you will not buy, go and get what you want from somebody who will. In giving them this alternative, the Government, in fact, exhausted

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all the resources which ingenuity could suggest for ensuring that the hospitals should be properly supplied. They sent out large stores, and lest these should not be forthcoming when needed, they empowered, ordered, urged, entreated even, their officers to supply their wants either in the market or from Lord Stratford.

Mr. Stafford, indeed, saw in this course an "attempt to make the Ambassador at Constantinople Commandant of the hospital at Scutari," and pronounced it "a very unwise one, and one that it might have been foreseen could not answer."* *Mutato nomine*, the observation would apply with equal force to the shop on which Mr. Stafford gives his friend unlimited credit. Only direct the shop-keeper to meet any demands that A.B. makes on him, and the shop-keeper becomes, according to this mode of reasoning, the head of A.B.'s family and establishment. Mr. Stafford is not singular in his reasoning. Lord Stratford owes all the abuse that has been heaped upon him, to this strange confusion of ideas. People voted him the Commandant of the place, and then naturally found fault with him for not incessantly inspecting the establishment supposed to be under his orders. The truth is, the Ambassador acted precisely in accordance with his instructions; and if he had interfered in the administration of the Hospitals, those who are now the most open-mouthed against him and the Government, would have had some ground for cen-

* 7669.

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suring him for his intermeddling, and the Ministry for "increasing the uncertainty of responsibility by "the interference of another authority."

The Duke of Newcastle did not rest satisfied with an application to the Ambassador. Fearing that the evils with which he had to deal might be too deeply rooted to be effectually removed by a mere outlay of money, he issued a Commission for the purpose of inquiring into the state of the hospitals and the medical department generally.* This Commission consisted of three members, two of whom were army surgeons of high rank,—one being an Inspector-General of Hospitals and the other a Deputy-Inspector,—the third was a barrister. They were directed to inquire into the condition and wants of the sick and wounded, and into the state of the hospital accommodation, and the supply of medical attendance, medicines, and diet provided for them; and to report every improvement that they could suggest for the correction of all deficiencies,—existing or potential,—in our military hospital establishments.† This step, also, has been deemed objectionable. In the first place, the Commission was suspected of being strongly influenced, or even secretly instructed, not to expose but to conceal the truth. One of its members was represented to the Committee, by Mr. Sidney Godolphin Osborne, as the son-in-law of Dr. A. Smith,‡ and thus family, as well as pro-

* 14635. † Rep. Hosp. Com. App. p. 53. ‡ 9034.

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fessional ties were expected to bind the Commission to a discreet silence. Indeed, even the Duke of Newcastle himself appears to have been in some measure swayed by a latent suspicion against the doctors, for he told Dr. A. Smith that he must "put "the barrister in an independent position, and in "fact make him the prominent person in the inves- "tigation,"* which he endeavoured to accomplish by throwing upon the legal member the burthen of examining witnesses. That the Duke was no party to any sinister design in issuing the Commission, but honestly desired that the task imposed upon the body should be thoroughly and stringently executed, is beyond doubt. Before they left England, he sent for the barrister, Mr. Maxwell, and in the course of a long conversation with him, stated that "he wished for a searching "investigation; he wished to have the truth "and the whole truth laid before him. He ex- "horted me," says Mr. Maxwell, "in the strongest "and most earnest manner, not to conceal anything, "for that the desire of the Government was to learn "from the experience of the past to avoid any error "for the future."† But if any additional proof was needed to show that these gentlemen were not a packed jury, it would be found in their first act. The unfortunate gentleman who, although an old bachelor, had been represented as Dr. Smith's son-in-law, having perished in the Prince, his surviving

* 14641. † 12937.

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colleagues offered the vacant Commissionership to Mr. S. G. Osborne ;* and it is hardly necessary to observe that if they had been desirous of screening any evils from the public gaze, they would hardly have selected for their fellow labourer, a person who had constituted himself the representative of the British public at Scutari, and who was well known to be a contributor to the columns of the *Times* newspaper.

Passing from the constitution of this Commission to the task allotted to it, it has been objected that its duties were inquisitorial merely, and that the Commissioners were not authorised to remedy evils or remove officers. The members of the Committee who dwelt upon this defect did not reflect that it applied equally to their own body, and might have been urged with equal effect against their appointment. When Mr. Roebuck, in one of the ten thousand questions which he addressed *ad populum* during the inquiry, observed, with well acted astonishment, to Mr. Maxwell, "So that the object of "sending you abroad was only to let us know, some "months after the evil had happened, what had hap-"pened ?"† he forgot that he and his colleagues were engaged in a similar and even more tardy duty. But surely nothing can be more futile than such an objection. Those who are the most competent to inquire are not necessarily the most competent to execute. A barrister is more skilful than a soldier

* 9035. † 13144.

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in extracting the truth from an unwilling witness. A doctor understands better than a military officer the sanitary condition and defects of an hospital. But does it follow that a triumvirate, consisting of a brace of surgeons and a lawyer, would have been the most fitting rulers of a military establishment? The suggestion is worthy of ranking with Mr. Layard's proposal to give horses to huts and siege guns. The Commissioners, however, although not entrusted with executive powers, were not instructed to remain silent for months, as Mr. Roebuck insinuated. As early as the 29th of November, Mr. Sidney Herbert wrote to Mr. Maxwell, requesting that the Commissioners would "not think it necessary to wait till their report was approved of before making their suggestions, and seeing the evil corrected, so far as it is possible."* On the 6th of January also, some four or five weeks after they had commenced their investigation, the Duke of Newcastle directed them to report to Lord William Paulet, who had been recently appointed Commandant, "all practical alterations which they recommend, with a view to the better organisation and working of the hospital."† If it be thought that these instructions were tardy, it may be as well to consider that the Commissioners had to inquire into evils, as well as to suggest remedies, and that they could not have accomplished, much

* 13149. † 13145.

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earlier, enough of the former, to enable them to execute properly the latter portion of their task.

"But," say the Committee, "this form of "proceeding, however well suited to redress "grievances at home, or to become a basis for "legislative measures, was ill adapted to relieve "the pressing wants of 5000 men suffering under "mismanagement and neglect." Who told them that it was ever intended to relieve the "pressing wants" of the men? Those wants were to be relieved by the Ambassador, by the Purveyors, and by the Commandant. The inquiry into the hospitals and the medical department abroad, was a necessary preliminary to the permanent, and if necessary, the organic improvement of the hospitals. Surely, if it be necessary that inquiry should precede reform, it must be equally necessary whether the institution to be reformed be abroad or at home; and the inquiry must be equally necessary, whether the improvement is to be effected by the Legislature, or by the Executive.

The objections to the intervention of Lord Stratford and to the appointment of a Commission, are, in truth, so captious as to warrant the belief that if those steps had been neglected, the same Committee would have expressed their deep regret, that at a time when our hospitals were said to be destitute and disorganized, the Ministry should have hesitated to avail themselves of the services of a nobleman, who, besides holding the rank of Her

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Majesty's Ambassador, possessed a vast personal influence over the Court and the Government to which he was accredited, and that they should have made no inquiry into the defects in our hospital system, with a view to the radical improvement of our establishments.

The Government took yet another and more important step, for which both the army and the country may well feel grateful. The want of a properly trained body of hospital nurses, has always been a standing reproach to the organisation of the British army. The only attendants known in our military hospitals were common soldiers, themselves probably but recently the inmates of the wards, and as little suited by taste or training, as by health, for the office. Female nurses had formerly been tried, but they had been found so much addicted to drink, and often so utterly callous to the sufferings of the patients, that the rude services of men taken from the ranks had long been preferred.* Dr. Andrew Smith called the attention of the Government at a very early period, to this defect.† At his recommendation, an attempt was made to collect volunteers for the purpose from the depôt at Chatham, but the scheme proved abortive. He then suggested the formation of a special corps of orderlies, trained in hospital duties, and unacquainted with those of the field.‡ Unfortunately, there was no class of men in the country from

* 14625. † 8683. ‡ 8683.

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which the Government could form at once such a corps; for in all Civil Hospitals women alone are employed as nurses. The consequence was, that when our army took the field, its hospitals were still dependent for attendants on the time-honoured system of soldier orderlies. That system now broke down. The public learned after the battle of the Alma, for the first time, that common soldiers were not as good nurses as the humanity of the age required. Still, the Government were at their wits' ends to procure any better.

It was under these perplexing circumstances, that Mr. Sidney Herbert appealed to that noble and gallant spirit, whose ministrations at Scutari have excited the admiration and sympathies of the civilized world. By a singular good fortune, it happened that the country possessed a woman, who, spurning the advantages which the accidents of birth and fortune had given her, had nobly descended into the arena of toil, and devoted her time and thoughts, her mental and physical energies, to the relief of suffering humanity. She was no amiable enthusiast of the moment, no sentimental dreamer lured away by the romantic idea of pouring wine and oil into the wounds of heroes. She was no novice in hospital life, for she had served an apprenticeship to it in the principal establishments in France and Germany. Miss Nightingale at once consented to undertake the great task which Mr. Herbert proposed to her. Under her gentle but firm superintendence, a body of some forty women was in one

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short month collected, organised, and on their way to the East, consisting partly of ladies of a devotional turn of mind, partly of nuns, but principally of professional nurses, trained in the large establishments of the metropolis. Their numbers were subsequently increased by successive reinforcements. Their deeds are known, and will not be forgotten.

But the valuable services rendered by this body did not, in the opinion of the Government, supersede the necessity of forming a trained corps of male nurses. The experience of the past had given good reason to fear that when the enthusiasm of the moment was past, and when the sway which Miss Nightingale exercised over a body, united by devotion rather than discipline, passed into inferior hands, female nurses might again prove unsuitable for military hospitals. The plan of forming a corps of hospital orderlies was still persevered in, notwithstanding the difficulties with which it was surrounded. The military authorities, while unwilling to spare efficient men from the ranks, were nevertheless reluctant to accept the services of civilians.* To meet this objection, enlistment was resorted to, but as there are no male nurses in civil life, none but untrained recruits could be obtained. These have come in but slowly, and the corps is still incomplete. Indeed, even when the requisite number shall have been obtained, it is probable that Mr. Sidney Herbert's

* 20647.

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fear that a body so constituted " will for some time work ill,"* will prove not unfounded.

Such then were the chief steps taken by the Government to meet the defects of our military hospitals in Turkey. They sent quantities of *matériel.* They empowered the purveyors to purchase at any cost every requisite. To ensure the proper supply of every necessary article they even devised the expedient of relieving the purveyor of the burden of purchasing goods, and the fear of spending the public money, by directing him to apply to the Ambassador. They sent out a special body of female nurses, such as no hospital or any other eleemosynary establishment ever beheld, and to detect existing, and if possible, to anticipate undeveloped evils, they instituted an inquiry into the whole organisation and working of our military hospitals. What more they could do, it is difficult to say; and therefore it is not easy to see why they should be blamed for the condition of the hospitals, except upon the pleasant principle that they are accountable for every petty misdeed of their subordinates. This doctrine would have been voted decidedly un-English, by a people which boasts of its strong instincts of justice; but if the British lion has now a fancy for holding every man responsible for the acts and neglects of every other, it may be as well to examine a little more closely into the real condition of Scutari last winter, and to ascertain what the evils really were.

* 20047.

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XX.

THE SURGEONS.

The charges against the hospitals made too deep an impression not to be still fresh in the public mind. Who has yet forgotten the lurid pictures which were presented by the public prints, of the cold, neglect, and starvation, which fell to the lot of our soldiers in the dismal white barrack of Scutari? Who has forgotten the mysterious horror which crept over him, as he read the obscure rhapsodies of S. G. O. in the *Times*? Who did not long for the elevation of even a corner of that impenetrable veil, under which the Reverend writer obstinately shrouded the iniquities of others, if not his own performances? The time has come at last for raising this veil, and what does the public see under it? Have the hints and insinuations and inuendoes been followed by proof? Or has John Bull been the dupe of the artifices of a showman? Has the veil been the simple curtain which conceals behind it a deep tragedy, or the tawdry daub which allures simple rustics to visit the humble mysteries of the booth or waggon? This is now the question, and to decide it, let the chief accusations which have been brought against the hospital be marshalled and plainly confronted with such evidence as bears upon them.

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1. One charge against the Government was, that their medical staff was insufficient. "The doctors," says Mr. Stafford, speaking of the place in November, "were not sufficient in number, and they were "over-worked. The doctors had not such a staff "of secretaries and clerks as they had in the "French hospitals. * The number of official "people was too small." † The Commandant, according to Mr. Osborne, "had no sufficient "dispensing staff, in short, the whole thing was "short handed. ‡ I assisted myself, as far as I "could, the surgeons" in operations. § Turn now from these loose assertions to the figures of the Hospital Commissioners. In the four weeks ending on the 4th, 11th, 18th, and 25th of November, the proportion of sick to each treating surgeon was 46, 49, 45, and 46 respectively. In the four following weeks the proportion was 47, 54, 43, and 62. This is the period of time over which the experience of these gentlemen extends, and the public may now contrast their statements with the facts.

"At first, after my arrival," says Mr. Macdonald, "it was not unfrequent, for it frequently "occurred to me, to hear of prescriptions being "taken to be made up, and there being nobody "there to make them up." It would have been fortunate if Mr. Macdonald, before making sure that "there was nobody there" to "make up pre-

* 7609. † 7790. ‡ 9022. § 9016. ‖ 6242.

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scriptions," had learned something of our hospital practice in this respect; for he would have discovered that those who told him this story had deceived him. By the rules of the service, every surgeon compounds his own medicines; and the rule is a wise one, for it insures the patient against the mistakes of ignorance, and prepares the surgeon to treat the sick in situations where apothecaries and dispensers are not at hand.

That Mr. Stafford should not have noticed the orderlies of the surgeons is perhaps not surprising, but we find in the report of the Hospital Commissioners, unequivocal evidence of the existence of such attendants. "The medical officer in charge of the patient," says Deputy-Inspector McGrigor, in giving an account of the *personnel* of the hospital and their duties, "prescribes for him, compounds, and sees that "*his orderly* administers it. I have not had occasion "to find fault on this subject. The rules of the "service have been strictly carried out by the "medical officers under me."* But that Mr. Stafford should have mistaken the assistant surgeons who attend upon the prescribing doctor in the French hospital, for secretaries and clerks, is neither flattering to those gentlemen, nor indicative of any very deep inquiry into that system, which he and his fellow depreciators of the English institution concur in voting perfect.† In our hospitals, the patients are treated by the second class staff sur-

* Rep. Hosp. Com., App. 306. † 7596, 9127.

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geons and assistant surgeons. The first class surgeons are consulting authorities merely, and are called in in all cases of gravity. In the French establishment, on the contrary, the first-class surgeon prescribes in all cases, and the inferior grades attend with note-books, take down his directions, and execute them. In the fine French hospital at Pera, which contained 1200 patients, there were eight prescribing surgeons, to each of whom two assistant surgeons were attached. Thus, the proportion of surgeons of all grades was one to fifty patients, and each chief surgeon had to visit thrice that number. In our hospitals, the proportion of treating surgeons alone was larger than that of the French, and besides them, there were from three to six consulting surgeons. Mr. Osborne was, of course, not indisposed to publish the fame of his own active works in operative surgery, as well as in charitable and religious exercitations; but their apparent value must unfortunately be somewhat impaired, since they were, as the above figures attest, supererogatory. He knows very well that at operations, surgeons were never wanting at Scutari. They always flocked to witness a spectacle which, however distressing they ought to be to a clergyman, are improving to them. What Mr. Osborne, however, probably does not know or remember, is, that at one operation—such was the indiscreet ardour of his superfluous zeal,—he not only thrust himself into the circle of surgeons, but actually

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elbowed away one of them, who quietly submitted, under the impression that his active neighbour was a senior medical officer just arrived, with whose appearance he was unacquainted.

But such was "the general confusion and total "absence of arrangement,"* that our medical men, according to Mr. Stafford, suffered their patients to die by changing their diet "by mistake." "I knew "one case," says the honourable gentleman, "of a "poor man, who told me that he was certain he "was dying, from an accidental change of diet that "was given to him instead of to another; he was "ordered a strengthening diet, and was getting "better, and he told me that it was changed to a "lowering one by mistake, and he was dying in "consequence; he knew he was dying in conse-"quence of it, and his last words to me were, 'I "suppose that in a great crowd they could not help "mistaking some;' and that poor man died."† This story, before it is examined, is enough to stir up every feeling of compassion, anguish, and indignation. The pity and admiration for the noble fellow's heroic resignation passes into a deep-seated desire for vengeance for the barbarous neglect to which he fell a victim. But before yielding to these sentiments, let the reader contemplate the scene once more. Let him observe that the poor man is so uncomplaining, that he has not whispered a doubt as to "the

* 7760. † 7768.

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mistake" to the doctor who visits him morning and evening, and who prescribes for him, not according to the state of his pulse or tongue, but by a simple inspection of the bed ticket, which bears the name of Jones while Smith is recumbent on the bed. He has tamely suffered the medical officer to prescribe for him, day after day, "by mistake," and it is only on his death-bed that he whispers in the strictest confidence to the sympathizing M. P., that he has fallen a sacrifice, a self-sacrifice, to a blunder. And the senator receives the communication in the same spirit. Not for the world would he start up and drag the stupid Esculapius to the man's bed-side to rectify the error. Far less would he make the corridors and wards, nay the hills and valleys of the surrounding country ring with his cries for justice, his calls for vengeance on such detestable neglect. No; he sits patiently by the bedside, and contemplating with deep but passive emotion the fate of the sinking warrior, buries the secret in his breast—for future use in the next session of Parliament!

Come, come; this is too bad. Let any reasonable man ask himself whether it is not much more likely that the change from a strengthening to a lowering diet followed, not preceded, a change of health;—that the poor soldier's food was no longer fit for him, before it was changed; that, in short, the mistake was his, in supposing that his failing health was owing to his altered

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diet, rather than the doctor's, in giving him food unsuited to his complaint. Even Mr. Stafford himself must have thought so at the time, or he certainly would hardly have failed to let, not the hospital authorities alone, but the whole world know of such a scandalous instance of murderous neglect.

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XXI.

SURGICAL APPLIANCES AND MEDICINES.

2. Hardly had the first ship arrived in the Bosphorus with wounded men from the Alma, when the *Times* announced that the hospitals had been left shamefully destitute of linen and lint for dressing wounds. No attempt was made to substantiate the charge before the Committee, beyond Mr. S. G. Osborne's assertion, that "linen was wanted most decidedly."* This "decided" piece of evidence, however, turns out to be based not on any personal knowledge on the subject, which on the contrary tends to prove the reverse,† but simply on an inference from the fact that Miss Nightingale requested Mr. Macdonald, of the *Times*, to advertise for that article.‡ It is superfluous to comment on this curious logic which concluded, from Miss Nightingale's step, that there could be no linen in the hospital. Miss Nightingale may have desired a store of old linen, although the Government stores were filled with the article; or she may have been misled by the prevalent rumour. Indeed, there is good reason to believe that she acted in the *bonâ fide* belief that there was a want of the material in question. Such a belief evidently ex-

* 9010—9012. † 9011—9013. ‡ 9010.

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isted among her friends. Mr. Maxwell mentions that he found that impression on the mind of Mr. Bracebridge, her excellent secretary, adviser, and friend. "He told me," says Mr. Maxwell, speaking of this gentleman, "that he had just found a quan-"tity of old linen in the purveyor's stores (the proper "place was the apothecary's stores); and he pointed "it out to me as a great discovery. I told him that "I had come from the apothecary's store, where I "had seen abundance of it."* As a further proof that no old linen was wanting, it may be mentioned, that Miss Nightingale does not appear to have supplied any to the Hospital. She provided many articles of food and clothing out of private resources at her disposal, among which are to be included Mr. Macdonald's unquestionably handsome contributions from the *Times* fund; † but in the list of those articles which she supplied to the Hospital Commissioners,‡ no mention is made of old linen.

Those Commissioners investigated the subject on the spot. And the result of their inquiry can leave no lingering doubt upon the matter. "I had "read in the papers, before I had left England," says Mr. Maxwell, "that the hospital was de-"ficient in linen and lint, and in common sur-"gical appliances; and we were naturally on "the *qui vive* to detect any deficiency.§ One

* 13013. † 6150. ‡ Rep. Hosp. Com., pp. 34, 35, and 41. § 13018.

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"of the first questions that I asked, when I got "into the apothecary's store was, 'Let me see the "linen;' and I saw a quantity of linen*—old linen "sheets."† But the Commission carried their inquiries into the past as well as the present. "As it had been generally rumoured," they say in their report, "that lint and old linen, and other "such appliances, had been wanting for dressing "the wounds of the men who had been brought to "the hospital after the engagement of the 20th of "September, we directed the attention of our "witnesses more especially to those articles, but "we did not elicit that any such want had been "experienced."‡ They say that they examined every surgeon and dispenser who had been in the place at the time of the supposed want. They questioned also the chaplain of the hospital. The concurrent testimony of all these witnesses proved clearly that the story was a mere fabrication. The fourteen surgeons, who were questioned, unanimously agreed in declaring that they had never known any want of lint or linen in the place; and one of the dispensers stated, that —besides several boxes containing each 25 lbs. of lint—420 packages of 1 lb., of that material had been counted in the store by himself and the chief apothecary, on the morning of the arrival of the

* 13020. † 13021.

‡ Rep. Hosp. Com., 33.

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wounded, in September, besides some 20,000 bandages, and 200 or 300 sheets of old linen.*

The only surgical appliance of which any want was ascertained by the Committee, was a species of splint called a McIntyre splint, used occasionally for compound fractures of the leg, but an article which, though convenient, is by no means essential in surgery. The Hospital Commission detected the same want, as also a want of oil silk, and of tow, for about two days in November last. Mr. Osborne made much of the McIntyre splint. It became in his hands a crutch by which he attempted to support his case. But what degree of neglect does this want indicate? "There are all sorts of notions," says Dr. Smith, "about what ought to be the character and "form of splints. It would be impossible for me, "unless I sent out every splint to be got in London, "to meet the views of every man. I therefore took "what the profession generally considered the best, "and sent out about four or five hundred sets of "them, which ought to have been enough for the "army for a long period."† Probably McIntyre splints were popular among the practitioners at Scutari, and there was a run upon them, but if they were at any time scarce, their substitutes were at hand. "On one occasion," says Mr. Evans, "I "was unable to get a McIntyre splint, but on "several occasions I got them from the apothecary

* See Mr. Andrews' evidence, Rep. Hosp. Com., App. p. 308.
† 9480.

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"—in some three or four cases."* "I once wanted "a McIntyre splint," says Mr. Hungerford, "but "those of the hospital were all in use. I put up "the leg without it. The man has gone home "since. I was quite satisfied with the ordinary "splints."† He would, indeed, have been very unfit for the profession of a military surgeon, if he had been unable to do his work without all the latest and patented appliances of a London hospital.

The want of an operation table has been magnified by Mr. Osborne into a grievous defect; and he has told with great effect, both in his book‡ and in his evidence,§ the active part which he took in an operation performed on a rickety table. It is true, as Dr. Forrest admits, that there was not, in the hospital, such tables as would be called in England operating tables, but there were "some tables," not rickety, but good firm tables, fit for the purposes of an operation.‖ It is true, Dr. Forrest did not reach Scutari till the 1st of January,¶ and Mr. Osborne left on the 19th Dec.;** but Dr. Forrest does not appear to have been struck by the wonderfully new look of the tables.

* Rep. Hosp. Com., p. 311. Mr. Osborne writes, "It is said, *only two existed in the whole establishment.*" Scutari and its Hospitals, p. 21. This *on dit* may be contrasted with the experience of a single surgeon. † Rep. Hosp. Com., 310.

‡ Scutari and its Hospitals, p. 19. § 9016. ‖ 11662,5.

¶ 11646. ** 9059.

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3. As to the alleged want of medicines, what want has been proved? Mr. Osborne mentioned to the Committee a want of *confectio opii*, and reported, on the authority of "Dr. Smith of Leeds," that no chalk mixture was to be had in the place. Such is the foundation for the comprehensive statement which Mr. Osborne has considered himself warranted in making in his pamphlet, that, to his knowledge, "at one time, the medical men had not at their disposal the commonest drugs for the treatment" of diarrhœa.* Now, even if it were true that the first-named medicine—which, by the way, is not in very general use—was not included in the medical stores of the hospital, every medical man knows that its absence was utterly immaterial as long as the establishment was amply supplied with the other and more commonly used preparations of opium—the powder, tincture, chalk mixture, extract, Dover's powders, and the preparations of morphia. Surely, this must have been well known to a gentleman who, according to his own account, has had, "for many years, an intimate acquaintance with most matters relating to medical and surgical practice."† But the fact that Mr. Osborne could not get *confectio opii*, on a casual and sudden demand at the nearest surgery—beyond which it seems that no inquiry was made‡—or that Dr. Smith told him that he could not procure chalk

* Scutari and its Hospitals, p. 13.

† Id. p. 2. ‡ Id. p. 2.

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mixture, is by no means conclusive evidence that the hospital was unprovided with those articles. There were two or three surgeries in the barrack hospital, as also in the general hospital, and to each a dispenser was attached, whose duty it was to keep his surgery duly supplied with medicines from the main stores of the Apothecary.* This duty, it would seem, from the evidence of one of the Hospital Commissioners, was not always faithfully performed, and it sometimes happened that instead of procuring fresh supplies when they were required, the dispenser would dismiss a messenger who applied for a drug, with the consolatory assurance that "there was none in store."† Hence probably arose the groundless reports that the stores were destitute of this and that medicine.

The Hospital Commissioners, in their inquiries on this subject, could extract from the numerous surgeons and dispensers whom they examined, nothing more than that nitric acid was missed by some of them for forty-eight hours, that others found a want of bicarbonate of soda for about the same length of time, and that others again, once, missed powdered opium.‡ But they at the same time ascer-

* 12992. † 12992, 12998.

‡ Rep. Hosp. Com. 33. An answer in the printed evidence indicates a much more serious deficiency than any above noticed. "When you were at Scutari," Mr. Roebuck asked of one of the Duke of Newcastle's Commissioners, "did you find that there was any want of opium there?"

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tained that satisfactory substitutes for these articles were in every case at hand, and they appear to think that those wants which they mention were

To which question Mr. Maxwell is made to answer, "Yes." (13529.) This little piece of evidence has quite a history of its own, which may be briefly told here, because it shows the spirit in which the inquiry was conducted by one, at least, of the gentlemen who were most active in its prosecution. Both Mr. Roebuck and Mr. Maxwell are members of a very gregarious profession, and more important secrets than the correspondence of those two gentlemen, touching the question and answer above cited, ooze out in robing rooms and reading rooms, and in the dining halls of the Temple. It appears from that correspondence that when the third report, which contains the evidence in question, was published, Mr. Maxwell wrote to Mr. Roebuck to request an opportunity of explaining to the Committee that there must be some misprint in the question, as he did not believe that the question had ever been put; for if it had, he would have given it a totally different answer. No answer was received for a week, in which interval the evidence was closed. At the end of that period, Mr. Roebuck wrote: "Upon inquiry I find that you had your evidence to correct, and omitted to mark the question and answer to which you now object. Your application is, therefore, now too late. The evidence is closed. But I cannot admit the truth of your assertion that such a question and answer never occurred. That confusion did occur during the examination, I fully allow; but the confusion was in your own answers, and not in the short-hand writer's notes." How Mr. Roebuck conducted this inquiry does not appear; but it is to be feared that here again, as in the Sebastopol inquiry, the learned gentleman showed a singular ignorance of the A B C of his profession. "Whether I noted my objection or not," was Mr. Maxwell's reply, "is an issue which can be disposed of in the simplest manner. The proof is in the printer's hands, and will speak for itself. To it I appeal, and I assert that oppo-

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more justly attributable to the confusion which, it seems, prevailed in the apothecary's stores,* than to the actual absence of the articles from those stores.

site to the question under discussion will be found a note in my hand-writing to the following effect, 'There is some mistake about this question. I certainly never said that there was a want of opium at Scutari,' &c. Notwithstandiug the opinion which you express that the confusion was in my answers, and not in the short-hand writer's notes, I must claim the right to persist in my disbelief that the confusion rested with me. But even if it did, it might find some excuse in a course of examination which introduced a question respecting the state of things at Scutari, in the middle of an inquiry touching Balaklava." The challenge thus held out was not accepted, and the evidence was left in its original condition;—whether because it harmonizes better with what Mr. Roebuck would desire to be the truth, or because the exposure of his "inquiry" might be disagreeable, it is unnecessary to conjecture.

* 12979.

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XXII.

THE BUILDING—THE FURNITURE.—THE WASHING

4. Even the state of repair of the buildings has been the subject of misrepresentation. The Barrack hospital, the Committee was told, was in the last stage of dilapidation. "The sick," says Mr. Macdonald, "occupied a series of wards, the floor-"ing of which was in a very bad state; the flooring "was open and rotten, and they lay upon the boards "in situations where they could not obtain the "necessary warmth in the treatment of their com-"plaints."* "I think Dr. Hall must be one of "those who expect very little," says Mr. Osborne, in allusion to the qualified approval of the hospitals, which the principal medical officer had expressed in his report; "to me it would be but "a mere mockery of the truth; for instance, he "could hardly have said that the necessaries were "in a proper state; and he could hardly call that a "proper state, in which cholera and dysentery "patients are lying covered with vermin, upon "boards so rotten, that Dr. McGrigor told me he "could not have them washed."† There is some truth in these descriptions, but how much? They apply correctly to two or three rooms which were occupied, for a short time, by sick men when the arrival of numbers of wounded, after the battles of Balaklava and Inkermann, created a large and

* 6036. † 9116.

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sudden demand for hospital accommodation. To the rest of the building which was occupied by the patients they are wholly inapplicable. The Barrack, it appears, is not by any means devoted wholly to invalids. A portion of it is occupied by a garrison of our troops.* The newest and best parts of the building were given up, last September, by the military, to the medical authorities. These, according to the Hospital Commissioners,† and to the engineer officer in charge of the building‡ were in good repair. The dilapidated portions, which were repaired in December and January, at the expense of the Embassy, were, with the exception of the few rooms above mentioned, never occupied by patients until after the repairs were completed.§ Except those rooms, then, which were in a sudden emergency occupied for a short time, until other accommodation could be procured, the hospital was not in the state of dilapidation described, and therefore the account given of its state of repair is almost wholly inconsistent with the truth.

5. The want of a sufficient supply of beds and bedding in the hospitals is undeniable, and therefore any exaggeration on the subject was unnecessary for the purpose of making a *prima facie* case against the Government. Mr. Layard would have us believe that "the men were almost dying for want of beds;"‖ but this was pushing extravagance to a point which even Mr. Osborne—the witness to

* 13081. † Rep. Hosp. Com. 24, and 13962, 3.
‡ Id. App. 328. § Rep. Hosp. Com. 26—28. ‖ 9264.

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whom the idea was interrogatively suggested—could not reach. Bedsteads were not supplied in sufficient numbers, it is true; but the patients who were without them, lay on raised sleeping benches, which skirted all the wards, and on which their mattresses were laid.*

As to bed-linen, Mr. Stafford's imagination could not leave the subject in its naked truth. "Were those beds provided with clean linen?" he is asked. "When I first went," he answers, "there was no linen."† Mr. Stafford arrived on the 8th of November. Now, Mr. Macdonald, who reached the scene on the 6th, says, "They had blankets "and sheets. I am not sure that all of them had "sheets; I rather think that some of them had not "sheets, but that might have arisen from the men "preferring the blankets."‡ He also states that he never supplied bedding to the hospitals at Scutari.§ There can be no question as to the truth of his statements. Mr. Macdonald was certainly not disposed to shut his eyes to the defects of the hospitals, and if sheets had been wanting, he would not have hesitated to purchase them, as he purchased shirts for the poor men who arrived from the Crimea without their knapsacks. But Mr. Macdonald was a sober-minded honest Scot, who, although liable sometimes to believe hastily and reason incautiously, did not suffer his imagination to overwhelm his judgment.

Beyond doubt, the hospital was not properly furnished. But for this what blame attaches to the

* 13062, 3 † 7607. ‡ 6029. § 6095.

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Home Authorities? The following table, compiled from the returns in the Appendix of the Hospital Commissioners' report,* will shew the quantity of bedding, utensils, and clothing actually in the custody of the purveyors at Varna and Scutari at the end of August and beginning of September; and if those at the former place did not reach the Bosphorus until late in November or early in December, the purveyors, the post office, and the transport service on the spot must share the blame among themselves.†

		VARNA.		SCUTARI.	Both Hospls.
		Received	In charge on 1st Sep.	In charge on 31st Aug.	Total in charge,
BEDDING.	Blankets, single	9898	5920	1158	7078
	Rugs	4949	2449	579	3028
	Palliasses	5010	1967	180	2147
	Bolsters			180	180
	Bolster cases	5002	1951		1951
	Sheets, single	14731	7850	1737	9587
	Beds or Mattresses, hair.	1206	705	318	1023
	Bolsters, hair	1206	706	318	1024
	Boards	6184	4484	750	5234
	Trestles	4279	3279	500	3779
	Cases for beds, waterproof	380	93	59	152
CLOTHING.	WOOLLEN. Gowns, serge	948	312	84	396
	WOOLLEN. Trowsers	948	312	84	396
	WOOLLEN. Waistcoats	948	312	84	396
	WOOLLEN. Caps, worsted	948	312	84	396
	WOOLLEN. Flannel Shirts	540	239	240	479
	WOOLLEN. Half Stocking, worsted	200	200		200
	WOOLLEN. Stockings & socks, pairs			50	50
	Slippers, leather	900	400	250	650
	Linen shirts	1080	480	480	960
	COTTON. Gowns	400	400	100	500
	COTTON. Trowsers	400	400	100	500
	COTTON. Waistcoats	400	400	100	500
	COTTON. Caps	400	400	100	500
	Bed pans	182	16	21	37
	Stool pans	294	164	36	200
	Chamber pots	1110	418	300	718

* pp. 265 and 281.

† See correspondence between Mr. Ward and Mr. Tucker, Rep. Hosp. Com. App. 275.

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It does not appear what became of the articles which had been received but were not in charge at the time referred to. Perhaps they were issued to regimental hospitals.

6. The state of the washing was certainly very bad, but that is no reason for asserting that no washing was done in the place. "They had no washing at "all for five weeks after my arrival in the East," says Mr. Macdonald, who, it will be remembered, arrived at Scutari on the 6th November.* "There "was no washing," he adds, "at any of the hos- "pitals except at the Barrack Hospital, which was a "depôt also; and, there being a number of soldiers' "wives there, some of the soldiers very probably "got some of their things washed by those wo- "men."† "There was no washing at first," Mr. Stafford told the Committee; "that was one of the "most horrible evils."‡ "But could not contracts "have been made for the washing?" he is asked; "They were made at the French Hospital," he replies, "but here there was none."§ Mr. Osborne, a shade more moderate than his friend, stated: "There were said to be contracts, but there was no "washing done. . . . Most assuredly there "was not any Government laundry."‖

The witnesses who denounced this defect of the hospitals, might well have afforded to confine themselves within the limits of strict truth. No intentional exaggeration is imputed to them on

* 6005. † 6134. ‡ 7780.
§ 7781. ‖ 9089, 9092.

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this point, but they are justly blameable for making hasty assertions without sufficient grounds for them. Their statements unquestionably created a most painful impression. That of Mr. Macdonald, indeed, was made the subject of a leading article in the "Times," challenging the wretched purveyors of the hospital, whose voice could not be heard for a month at least, to contradict the assertion, if they could or dared. But, when something better than hearsay evidence is produced, what appears to be the plain truth of the matter? At the General Hospital there was a washhouse, where the washing of that establishment was regularly done, week after week, by eight or ten Armenians, receiving monthly wages from the purveyor.* Each patient received his two shirts weekly, and the only complaints on the subject of the washing in this building was, that the men sometimes got their neighbours', instead of their own shirts, and that, as the Armenians did not boil the clothes, these were often but imperfectly purified.† At the Barrack Hospital, the purveyor entered into a contract for the washing. "This Hospital," the late Mr. Ward told the Commissioners, "was em-
"ployed as such on the 26th September. I think a
"few days after, in the hurry of the moment, it
"being necessary to look for some one to wash
"for the 2,000 sick and wounded who had come

* Mr. Ward's Evidence, Rep. Hosp. Com. App. p. 301.

† Rep. Hosp. Com. 39; and Miss Nightingale's evidence, App. p. 332.

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" down from the Crimea, I entered into a contract " from necessity, there being no means of washing " here. The man's name is Ottone. He did not " carry it out to my satisfaction, either in clean- " liness or punctuality. . . . I made an effort " to remove the contract to another person; that " was about the second week of November."* So much, then, for the assertions that there was no laundry and no contractor.

Let us now see whether it is true that there was no washing when Mr. Stafford arrived,† and none for five weeks after Mr. Macdonald's first visit. According to the return laid before the Committee, 4,832 articles were washed, in November, for the Barrack Hospital; in December, 14,044; and, in January, 23,402.‡ According to the returns which are printed by the Hospital Commissioners in the appendix to their report, it appears that, on the day after Mr. Macdonald's arrival, 352 articles were brought back from the wash to the same hospital; on the 12th of November, 177 articles; on the 14th, 444, &c.§ On examining these returns, however, it appears that the goods washed were chiefly beds, blankets, sheets, great coats, coatees, &c., while there were only half a dozen shirts washed during the whole month. The cause of this is given with some approach to accuracy by Mr.

* Rep. Hosp. Com. 39; and Mr. Ward's Evidence, App. p. 301. † 8th Nov., 7505. ‡ 2nd Rep. App. 705.
§ Rep. Hosp. Com. App. 272.

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Osborne. "The men," he says, "knowing [that] "their linen would be ordered away from them, and "that as there was no laundry, they would never "see it again; when it was too bad to wear, they "used to hide it under their beds."* When the attention of the purveyor was called to this practice, and to the consequently filthy condition of the personal linen of the soldiers, he instantly employed a number of soldiers' wives; and those women washed 595 shirts in the week ending on the 23rd of November, and 394 in the week ending on the 1st of December.† And yet, with this evidence staring them in the face, the Committee reported, that "in the Barrack Hospital at Scutari, during "the month of November, while there were about "2,000 patients in that hospital, the whole number "of shirts washed was only six!"

These mistatements are pointed out, not to defend the washing of the hospital, but to shew the degree of credit to which such evidence is entitled, and the degree of accuracy with which the Committee executed its task. It is readily admitted that the condition of the washing was miserably defective. The Hospital Commissioners denounce it at the Barrack as "insufficient in quantity "and very inadequately performed;"‡ and it is evident that the provision which was made for the purpose by the purveyors was insufficient, since Miss

* Scutari and its Hospitals, 19. † Rep. Hosp. Com. App. 273.
‡ Rep. Hosp. Com. 41.

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Nightingale established a wash-house at the end of November, and appears to have washed some 500 shirts weekly there, besides other articles.* This deficiency, however, is no excuse for the exaggerations and mistatements which have been circulated, or for the invectives which have been heaped on the purveyors for their imputed neglect.

It was but natural that those officers should, in the first instance, have resorted, like the French, to the employment of a contractor. Such is the ordinary practice of the service, and even if it were not, the pressing circumstances of the case would have justified the course which they pursued. They might, indeed, have been more energetic in their conduct when they found that the contractor broke faith with them; but Constantinople is not London, and even if contractors were as abundant in the former as in the latter capital, the legal means which an Englishman would find before a Cadi for compelling the performance, or punishing the breach of an agreement, might not be as obvious or as efficacious as those offered in our tribunals. Even the French, notwithstanding their admirable hospital system, had, according to Mr. Stafford, "a great difficulty about the washing."†

* Rep. Hosp. Com. 41. † 7602.

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XXIII.

MEDICAL COMFORTS.

7. But all the unfounded assertions, all the exaggerations, and all the inventions hitherto noticed sink into utter insignificance when compared with the numerous and varied forms of error, both of asseveration and suggestion, which were hazarded in support of the imputation that the hospitals were most inadquately supplied with medical comforts, if not wholly destitute of them. So busy has misrepresentation been with this subject, and so general is the consequent misconception in the public mind, that it is necessary to examine the evidence with some detail.

"With respect to comforts, and supplies of "such articles as sago, arrowroot, and the "little comforts that are usually supplied in hos- "pitals, and which are necessary there, was there "an adequate supply of them?" asked Mr. Roebuck of Mr. Macdonald. "At different periods," is the answer, "the supplies of these, as well as "of the other articles, fell short, and the regu- "lations of the service, or the mode in which "the officers comprehended the proper discharge "of their duties, appeared to exclude them from "making purchases on the spot; and the result "was that the supplies ran out, and they were "obliged to wait for fresh supplies from home."*

* 6079.

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One is tempted to stop here for a moment, and ask what these regulations were, and how they had been misapprehended. But the Committee was not over-curious. The statement was disparaging, and further inquiry might possibly prove that it was unfounded. It was not, therefore, sifted. In answer to another question, the same witness stated that, "besides tea,* arrowroot, sago, port "wine, Marsala, brandy, and a variety of other "things," were wanting in the hospitals.† "I "found that the whole purveying of the medical "comforts, I may say, so far as I saw it," observes Mr. Osborne, "was done by Miss Nightingale, through "money subscribed from voluntary contributions, "and given to Mr. Macdonald, of the 'Times.'"‡ According to Mr. Stafford, Miss Nightingale "put "herself into communication with Mr. Osborne;" Mr. Osborne "was in communication with Mr. "Macdonald; and there were immense supplies con- "stantly coming into the hospital, from the arrange- "ments that were made."§ Such is the testimony of the three witnesses to whose evidence the atten- tion of the public has been hitherto confined.

Let us now see what Miss Nightingale says on the same subject. Her evidence must be the best, for she is represented by all these gentlemen as the chief caterer of the hospital. Her character places her word beyond the reach of suspicion, and if she were capable of departing from the truth, it is

* 6092. † 6093. ‡ 9055. § 7766.

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hardly probable that the bias of her testimony would be depreciatory of her own exertions. Now let the reader examine the title and the contents of the following table, which is extracted from the report of the Hospital Commissioners. In examining it, it is important to bear in mind that the medical comforts provided by the "Times" fund were committed to her charge, and issued by her.

Average Daily Issue of Extra Diets supplied from F. Nightingale's Kitchens, to the Extra Diet Rolls of the medical officers, Barrack Hospital, Scutari, from 13th of January, 1855, to 13th of February.

No. Supplied.		From Public Stores.	From Private Stores.
25 gallons.	Beef tea . .	80 lbs Beef.	
* 15 „	Chicken broth	28 Chickens.	12 Chickens.
* 40 „	Arrow root .	. . . . .	Arrow root.
15 „	Sago . . .	. . . . .	Sago.
240 quarts.	Barley water	Barley.	
10 „	Rice water .	Rice.	
8 „	Lemonade .	. . . . .	Lemons.
* 30 „	Milk . . .	. . . . .	Milk.
275 portions.	Rice puddings	Rice.	
* 15 bottles.	Port wine .	. . . . .	Port wine.
3 „	Marsala . .	. . . . .	Marsala.
* 3 „	Brandy . .	. . . . .	Brandy.
15 lbs.	Jelly . . .	. . . . .	Isinglass.
4 doz.	Eggs . . .	. . . . .	Eggs.
* 40 „	Chickens . .	28 Chickens.	12 Chickens.

The supply in December was about the same as the supply in January.*

The table needs explanation. Half-a-dozen articles have asterisks prefixed to them. The following passage from the report of the Hospital Commission will explain their meaning.

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"From Miss Nightingale's evidence, it appears "that some of the articles which she supplied from "private sources were so supplied, not because the "purveyor was unable to furnish the goods in "question, but because the quality of those which "he procured was not good. This was the case "with respect to the articles marked with an "asterisk; viz., chickens, arrowroot, milk, port "wine, and brandy. The other articles in the list, "which were supplied from private sources, were "refused to Miss Nightingale on requisition."*

But let us turn to that lady's evidence. "As "to the medical comforts," she says, adverting to the above table; "the beef we have "always had from the purveyor. The chickens "were sometimes so bad, that I have often had to "return them to the purveyor. He said he could "get no better.† Our cook could not make soup "with them; so, to make soup, I was obliged to "get others. Arrowroot has been supplied to me "in part by the purveyor. Only on one occasion "did he give me half the quantity I asked for; "on the others, he always gave me the quantity I "asked, but our own arrowroot was much better. "For the sick it is important to have the best. The

* Rep. Hosp. Com., 41.

† "There has been a great consumption of fowls," says Mr. Stuart, the purveyor of the Barrack Hospital, in his evidence on the 16th of December before the Hospital Commissioners; "three days ago there were 220 issued. That day an order was given for 300. Next morning only 120 could be procured." p. 316.

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" sago I asked for of the purveyors, but did not get " it.* The lemons also they declined giving me. " The milk was so bad, that I could not use it for " sick cookery, and I could not get enough; so I " always supplied it myself. The port wine was " declined. The medical officers came to me from " different divisions and said the port wine was " bad, and asked me for some. This has frequently " happened. The same with the brandy. Brandy " was never refused to us, but it was bad. " The medical officers asked me for it. The eggs " I used to get from the purveyor. About two " months ago my requisitions for them began to " be refused. When my requisitions had been " declined a considerable number of times, I ceased " to apply, and have ever since supplied the eggs " from private sources. They have been very " scarce, and very dear during that period; so has " milk, so have chickens. With regard to the " wine, I used to issue arrowroot without wine, " even after the medical officers made requisitions " on me, and I insisted on the men putting into it " the port which they got from the purveyor. I " did not issue the wine, until the medical officers " said the port was so bad." †

It thus appears that at a time when the patients in the hospital fluctuated from 3500 to 4300, neither

* In the return of medical comforts in the purveyor's stores on the 31st of January, it appears that there were 1353 lbs. of sago lying in store on that day.—Rep. Hosp. Com. 42.

† Rep. Hosp. Com. App. p. 343.

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port, brandy, arrowroot, chickens, or milk were ever wanting in the Government stores; that the whole quantity of port supplied from other stores amounted to 15 bottles daily; and that those 15 bottles, like the brandy, arrowroot, milk, chickens and chicken broth, were issued by Miss Nightingale, not because the purveyor was insufficiently supplied, but because some surgeons thought that the quality of her goods was better than that of his. And let it not be supposed that wine was husbanded with a niggard hand. "We think it "right to observe," say the Hospital Commissioners, "with respect to one important article in the "catalogue of medical comforts, viz., port wine, that "the quantity which has been used, as we are informed, in these hospitals, has been, in our opinion, "greatly excessive, and wholly disproportioned to "the real wants of the sick."* The truth is, many of the younger surgeons, either frightened or infected by the outcry which one or two newspapers made about port wine, took to prescribing it frantically; and on some days in December last, the consumption is said to have exceeded the enormous quantity of 40 dozen per diem. As to the quality of the wine, opinions differ. Mr. Macdonald tasted some which he thought a compound of logwood, vin ordinaire, and brandy.† The Duke of Newcastle's Commissioner thought that the wine, which he tasted on several occasions, was

* Rep. Hosp. Com. 41. † 7025.

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better than that which is served to barristers in the Halls of the Temple. *De gustibus, &c.*

Surely the contrast which the simple and unadorned statement of the truthful, high-minded woman presents to the exaggerations which have been palmed upon the public, should be as instructive as it is striking. It should teach the public to be cautious how they accept the vague and general statements of persons with whose characters and motives they are not acquainted. It should teach gentlemen like Mr. Osborne, not to confound the inferences of loose reasoning with the results of actual observation, and to fancy that both are equally facts. And it should teach gentlemen like Mr. Roebuck, who have attained to the rank of Queen's Counsel without having mastered the first elements of the rules of evidence, not to seek for information at second-hand.

When the blindest confidence is thus placed, by men who ought to know better, in statements which a moment's consideration must shew to be worthless in the scientific examination of facts, it is not surprising that men who have not had the advantage of an education that teaches the necessity of weighing assertions before swallowing them, should have unhesitatingly accepted every story, however improbable, and every accusation, however cruel. The history of the hospitals at Scutari teems with illustrations of this want of just caution on the part of the public. Mention has already been made of the

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lint and linen case. The evidence of Miss Nightingale shows the foundation on which the tale of the want of medical comforts is based. Another instance of this unreflecting credulity is to be found in the evidence of the Hospital Commission, and it is so remarkable that it is worthy of notice here.

It may, perhaps, be still fresh in the public recollection that a letter, purporting to be written by one of the Government nurses at Scutari, appeared in the *Times* of Dec. 8, giving so terrible an account of the neglect and want to which the sufferers in the hospital were exposed, that the whole community was excited to the highest pitch of indignation. "Government is liberal," said the writer, "and for "one moment I would not complain of their desire "to meet all our wants; but with such a number of "wounded coming in from Sebastopol, it does appear "absolutely impossible to meet the wants of those "who are dying of dysentery and exhaustion. Out of "four wards committed to my care, eleven men have "died in the night, simply from exhaustion, which, "humanly speaking, might have been stopped, could "I have laid my hands at once on such nourishment "as I knew they ought to have had. . . . Wine "and bottles of chicken broth, preserved meat for "soup, &c., will be most acceptable. You must be "told again that we do not complain of the remiss-"ness of the authorities to do what they can, but "even the necessary delayed (delays ?) are fatal to "the men, reduced, as they are, to the last stage of

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"exhaustion. I expect to find two more dead on "going round this morning;-that will be a propor- "tion of 11 to 30 in two days."

The distress and excitement caused by these statements is not yet forgotten. Lord Derby cited the letter on the meeting of Parliament, and called the Ministry to account for neglect so disgraceful and barbarous. What could they say in their defence? The Duke of Neweastle could not impeach the testimony of such a witness, for not only was her devotion to the sacred cause of humanity a guarantee of her veracity, but the tone of her letter betrayed a desire to palliate the conduct of the authorities, whom her evidence tended to condemn.

Now, in the appendix to the report of the Duke of Newcastle's Commissioners, is to be found the deposition of the only one* of the Government nurses who had four wards in her charge. And what does that lady prove? Her wards, she states, "contained the worst cases of diarrhœa, "dysentery, fever and diseases of the chest. . . "I have since had to believe that they were hope- "less cases. . . "I cannot say that there was "a single case in which a man lost his life from "want of port wine or any other thing. The men "died very fast. Many were in a dying state when "I went to them, and I do not think that restora- "tives would have revived those who did die. I

* See Miss Nightingale's Evidence, Rep. Hosp. Com., App. 330.

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" do not recollect a single case where I was unable " to get restoratives in any emergency. The daily " mortality in my wards"—which, from an earlier part of the evidence would appear to have contained, not 30, but some 170 patients—" was " four, five, or six. I do not think it ever ex- " ceeded six. I do not recollect that it ever " amounted to six."* Miss Nightingale stated that she inspected the wards in the charge of the witness just cited. " I turned my atten- " tion," said Miss Nightingale, " to the cases she " had to attend. I do not think that any of the " men ever suffered for the want of port negus or any " other thing. I think the supply given to them " was quite sufficient. . . . I have never had any " report made to me by any of the nurses or by " any other person, that any life was ever lost in the " Hospital from the want of any restoratives or " anything else being at hand. I do not think " that any such case could have happened without " its coming to my knowledge. . . No nurses " have ever sat up during the night. . . In " some special cases I have been called up during " the night, when I have taken with me a nurse " to attend those cases. Miss ——," the nurse with the four wards, " is not one. The nurses " report to me every day the number of deaths " in the wards which they attend. I am quite " sure none ever reported to me as many as eleven

* Rep. Hosp. Com., App. 330.

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" deaths. Five is the extreme number ever re-
" ported to me by any nurse." *

What other inference is to be drawn from this evidence than that either the editor of the *Times* unwittingly gave circulation to a forgery; or, that the writer of the letter which appeared in that journal, stated what was not true? Let us hope that the former is the correct explanation. It would not, perhaps, be the only occasion on which practical jokers amused themselves during the winter in concocting horrors for the especial edification of the able but excitable conductors of that popular journal. The solution would be, at all events, less painful than one which attributed to any of Miss Nightingale's noble-hearted followers the slightest deviation from the truth.

* Id., 331.

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XXIV.

DIET—COOKING—DIET-ROLLS—DISINFECTANTS.

The instances of misrepresentation which have been above noticed were direct and palpable departures from the truth. But this was not the only means by which the public was misled. The blue books abound with that peculiar form of statement, which may be described in the language applied by which Mr. Roebuck and Mr. Osborne in charming harmony, to one of the returns of the medical department, "though true in the letter, it creates "impressions which would be untrue."* Here is a curious and amusing specimen. In the course of an animated description of the varied services, which he, at different times, rendered to the neglected and starving inmates of the Hospital, Mr. Stafford stated to the Committee:—"On "one occasion, I remember Lady Stratford, hear-"ing that the people were coming (from the "Crimea to Scutari), had brought an enormous "cauldron of chicken broth with rice in it. That "I distributed to them all."† Very simple, and very straightforward, and, as far as it goes, very true also—except that Lady Stratford's visit was on the day after the arrival of the men, and that Mr. Stafford distributed but a small portion of her Ladyship's good broth. Now, what is the obvious

* 9196, 9038. † 7784.

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inference? Clearly, that but for Lady Stratford's bounty and Mr. Stafford's activity, the poor soldiers would have been left famishing. But any such inference would be absolutely false, and for the simple reason that all the facts have not been stated. It so happens, however, that the honourable gentleman had for his fellow-labourers in this arduous task two of the Duke of Newcastle's Commissioners, whose version of the transaction gives it a rather different complexion. According to them, Lady Stratford's chicken broth was a mere delicacy, such as a kind and compassionate English woman might be expected to bring to the men to testify her sympathy for their sufferings, and to make her visit welcome;—just as she used sometimes to bring trembling mounds of jelly to the officers. Mr. Stafford was requested by one of the nurses to distribute a score of tin cups of the soup, not to famishing creatures, but to such of the patients as might safely be allowed the luxury. Dr. Cumming and Mr. Maxwell assisted him in the task, the former selecting here and there the proper objects for the treat, the latter discharging the humbler duty of carrying the tray. Now observe how the omission of one particular here, and a trivial alteration of another there, change all the features of a case. In Mr. Stafford's account, poor starving wretches are seen rising up eagerly from their beds of anguish, and convulsively carrying to their lips the delicious beverage which an energetic angel

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of the masculine gender dispenses to them. In the less romantic version which is attributed to the members of the Duke of Newcastle's Commission, a hard-headed Scotch surgeon, followed by a quondam secretary of the Admiralty, and a bewildered-looking specimen of the "long robe," goes from bed-side to bed-side picking and choosing, out of a long gallery of patients, a man here and there, who is not in actual want—for there are none such—but who may without danger to his health be allowed the sapid delicacy!

But "false impressions" have been created by yet other methods. Take, for example, the means of cooking afforded by the hospitals. Mr. Osborne not only stated to the Committee that "there was not the means of properly cooking the meat,"* but denounced the want with a great show of precise calculation in one of his letters to the *Times*. And this assertion derived some apparent corroboration from Mr. Stafford's statement that the "coffee was prepared in the open air, or the tea."† The Committee, perfectly satisfied to accept as gospel every statement which damaged the authorities, never cared to cross-examine their witness as to the number or size of the fire-places, boilers, &c. Had they done so, they would have found either that he knew nothing of the subject on which he was giving evidence, or that he was deliberately deceiving them. The truth is, both the barrack and the general hospitals

* 9068. † 7773.

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were provided with large kitchens, each containing thirteen enormous cauldrons. Some of these were reserved for making tea; others were employed in boiling the soup and meat, while one or two were actually not used—because not needed. The boilers in the former building held 56 gallons each, while those in the latter contained 24.* These figures of arithmetic, though less charming, are more accurate than those of Mr. Osborne's rhetoric, and will afford better materials for deciding whether there were or not "the means of cooking the meat." The real culinary wants of the hospital related to the means of cooking delicacies, such as arrow-root, and not the articles of ordinary diet, like meat, which were boiled in the large coppers of the kitchen. This want was gradually supplied; for although it cannot, with any very scrupulous regard for accuracy, be said, with Mr. Stafford, that "they were constantly erecting new kitchens,"† it appears that four supplementary kitchens were fitted up during the winter.‡ It may be worth while adding that the beverage which Mr. Stafford saw cooked in the open air was not intended for the patients at all. It was merely the coffee which each orderly prepared for his own breakfast or supper.

It would seem that Mr. Osborne was not only misinformed on some points, but sadly uninformed on others. Thus, although scarcely a day passed

* Rep. Hosp. Com. 24, 25. † 7777.

‡ Rep. Hosp. Com. 24.

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during his six weeks' stay in the East, that he did not walk through the greater part of the hospital,* this gentleman could not tell the Committee whether diet rolls were prepared daily, or even kept at all,† —and yet he found them at once on his visit to the French hospital.‡ What, asked one of the members, in evident astonishment, "was there an uniform dietary for the whole of those sick and wounded?" "I never saw," was Mr. Osborne's answer, "but "one description of meat served—boiled meat every "day. There are what are called extra diet, full "diet, and three or four characters of diet in all "hospitals. I saw nothing of the kind; there might "have been." § Again, he never saw disinfecting agents of any kind used. ‖ He never saw any Government wine during his stay at Scutari. Though he took the Russian prisoners under his special protection, and had once to take the law in his own hands in their defence, ¶ he had not the least idea whether the officers and soldiers were lodged in separate wards, or lived intermixed.** As for medicines, he did not see more than a couple of doses in the course of all his peregrinations through the establishments.†† It is unfortunate that Mr. Osborne's want of information should invariably be as injurious to the hospitals as his

* 9002. † 9009.

‡ 9307, where by the way, he also found a baker, although the bread was baked by a contractor in Pera! See Scutari and its Hospitals, p. 52. §

9306, 9. ‖ 9271. ¶ 9179. ** 9145. †† 9106.

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misrepresentations. The circumstance is accidental, no doubt, but nevertheless noticeable. It is difficult to avoid observing that ignorance on such points is very remarkable in a gentleman who went out to the East for the express purpose of examining and exposing the true state of the hospitals at Scutari, and who, on his return, proclaimed that he had got to the bottom of the deep well in which the truth lay concealed. Surely, in justice to the medical officers in charge of the establishments in question, Mr. Osborne ought to have had the candour to admit that he had never turned his attention to the points on which he was thus questioned. In justice to the public he ought to have guarded them against the inferences which must naturally be drawn from his answers, when coupled with his account of his performances. In justice to himself he ought to have avoided the suspicion of designedly creating false impressions. If it were true, as he represented, that he had been everywhere and seen everything, and probed the evil to the bottom, what could the world conclude from his never having seen diet rolls, port wine, medicines, or disinfectants, but that such articles were unknown in the establishment?

However, the means of rebutting such false inferences are happily at hand. The diet roll is the subject of repeated mention in the report of the Hospital Commission. "The medical officer prescribes daily, "in his morning visit, the diet and articles of medical "comfort which he thinks suitable for each patient,

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" for the following day." " The diet roll is not avail-
" able after breakfast," for enabling the orderly to draw provisions from the steward's office, " being " in use for marking the diets for the next day."* " Much time is necessarily consumed daily by the " first-class staff-surgeon in revising their diet rolls, " or catalogue of articles of food and drink pre-
" scribed for each patient,"† &c. &c. " A diet-roll," says Dr. McGrigor, in his evidence before the Commissioners, " is made out every morning. " The men's names are inserted every morning by " the ward-master. The medical officer makes it " up for the following day—the extras as well as " the ordinary rations. . . . The purveyor " has always, as far as I know, been able to supply " the articles required. I have no complaints that " extras have not been delivered."‡ Enough has been already said on the subject of medicines and port, to enable the reader to determine whether Mr. Osborne's failing to observe those articles, was owing to their total absence, or to the degree of care and research which characterised his investigations. As to the Russian prisoners, it might have been expected that every person who had paid them even a single visit, in corridors H. and I., would have recollected that the officers were accommodated in two wards, wholly apart from the men. With respect to disinfectants, Mr. Selkirk Stuart, one

* Rep. Hosp. Com., 45. † Id. p. 30.
‡ Rep. Hosp. Com., App. 306.

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of the purveyors, stated to the Commissioners that Sir William Burnett's solution of chloride of zinc was in constant use;* and Mr. Maxwell's evidence before the Committee, in noticing the neglect which he detected on one occasion, to keep one of the barrack surgeries properly supplied with chloride of lime, incidentally testifies to the presence of abundance of that article in the apothecaries' stores.† Need we now wonder that Mr. Osborne, after promising, in the first sentence of his work, "a fair and intelligible account of those scenes connected with the present war," which came under "his own observation,"‡ should provokingly and repeatedly refuse, in the sequel, to give his readers any "details?"§ Need we wonder that he furnished them, instead, with half a dozen lithographs, and eked out his little book with imaginary descriptions of battle-fields—of old sailors standing pensively by the grave-side of departed comrades—of the arrival of the post-bag in an English country-house—of his own visit to the mother of a deceased officer—and of many other matters equally affecting and equally interesting, but alas! equally irrelevant to "Scutari and its Hospitals?"

The subject of disinfectants naturally diverts the attention to the condition of the places in which such agents are used, and by a necessary transition

* Rep. Hosp. Com. App. 317.

† 12996.

‡ Scutari and its Hospitals, 1.

§ Id. ex gr. pp. 3, 21, 32.

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to Mr. Stafford, with whose name it is now o' days difficult to dissociate them. At the risk of disgusting the reader, a few words must be said upon this very nasty topic, and that, too, with as much gravity as can be mustered for the occasion. Mr. Stafford represented the places in question in so horrible a condition, that the ante-rooms were a foot deep in unutterable abomination. So overwhelming was this hideous revelation, that the editor of the *Times* fairly took leave of his senses, and choking with indignation, represented to the world, in a tremendous leader, that the ante-rooms thus defiled were, not the outer chambers which are always attached, in Turkey, to such apartments, but the main entrance of the hospital itself. The blunder, however, though ridiculous, was excusable; for, certainly, Mr. Stafford's description was well calculated to agitate every feeling, and obscure the mental vision. Only conceive human beings breathing an atmosphere so contaminated, for days, weeks, months, perhaps—no, not months, for no human constitution could resist, so long, the horrible poison. For, from the Report of the Hospital Commission,* it appears that on each story a large place of the kind was established at each of the inner angles of the building, and as there are two or three stories, it is pretty clear that the pollution of the air must have been frightful beyond all conception.

And yet, marvellous though it may seem, some

* Page 24.

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days elapsed before Mr. Stafford became aware of the existence of the nuisance. "It was," he says, "within three or four days after I had been there that "my attention was called to it."* What, Mr. Stafford, did the sense of smell give you no hint for three or four days, of the frightful atmosphere in which you were living, moving, and breathing? If ignorance be bliss in any case, Mr. Stafford's brief ignorance of the proximity of the danger was surely that case. But no; if the olfactory nerve failed to give him warning of his peril, it was not because it was paralysed, but simply because it was puzzled. The bad odours of the hospital were so numerous and so complicated as to defy the analytical powers of the keenest nose. It was not until the sense of vision was called to its assistance, that the frightful horror was detected;—and not detected only, but experienced in all its malignity. "The corridor was "never properly ventilated; then there was a "tremendous smell of wounds and uncleanliness "of every kind, so that it would not be so easy "to detect this stench, as if it was a foul spot in "a building otherwise clean, in which you trace "it at once: but the stench from the wounds and "from diarrhœa patients was so great, that a per-"son might be there some time, unless his attention "was particularly directed to it, without finding "it out." †

If ignorance be bliss, see how truly knowledge is

* 7573. † 7575.

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misery. As long as Mr. Stafford breathed the corrupted air, unconscious of its corruption, he continued in excellent health; but hardly had he seen the source of its pollution five short minutes,* when the pains and penalties of diarrhœa seized him. Surely, so remarkable a case should find a place in some of our medical records. The flippant sceptic may perhaps be reminded by it, of the story of the man who could see people ten miles off, so distinctly, as to hear every word that they said; but the more serious philosopher will hesitate before he casts a doubt on the authenticity of the case, when he reflects that in three of the four turrets which flanked the large building, and which were in close proximity to the shocking places, were quartered Major Sillery, the Commandant, Dr. Cumming, the principal medical officer, and Miss Nightingale and her numerous staff, and that those persons are happily still living and in excellent health. The reason is simple. They were less curious than Mr. Stafford, and did not care to confirm the unpleasant evidence of one sense by the corroborative testimony of another; and all the world knows, ever since Mr. Stafford was examined by the Committee, that it is the eye, not the nose, that gives admission to the seeds of disease—at Scutari.

* 7523.

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XXV.

THE CENSORS.

Such is the evidence bearing on some of the leading accusations against the Government at home, and the local authorities, in respect of the condition of the Hospitals at Scutari. And yet, long after this tissue of absurdities had been exposed, long after these mis-statements had been met by the strongest and most conclusive counter-evidence, Mr. Layard did not scruple to exclaim: "Who can read without "emotion the evidence of such witnesses as Mr. "Stafford and Mr. Osborne?"* Emotion, indeed! True; it is not easy to read it without a certain kind of emotion; but the feeling is not exactly that which the speaker suggests. It is more akin to the emotion which rises in the breast of every honest man when he finds that gentleman, months after Miss Nightingale's evidence has been brought pointedly under his attention,† assert, with that serene assurance which proudly scorns the shackles of vulgar truth, that our men were dependent for the small comforts supplied to relieve their condition, on the "funds supplied by private benevolence, and "administered by a great organ of public opinion."‡

* Speech at a meeting of the Administrative Reform Association, reported in the *Times* of June 14.

† On March 30, in Mr. Maxwell's evidence, 13114.

‡ Speech, &c.

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It is akin to the emotion which is excited by Mr. Roebuck's rejected resolution, averring that our men in hospital "suffered from insufficient "medical attendance, and insufficient medicine, "and an absence of medical comforts."*

It would be easy to continue from this till to-morrow citing fresh proofs of the inaccuracy of the accusing witnesses. But it is unnecessary to weary the reader. If their evidence has been examined so much in detail, it is because the subject on which they speak excited great and general interest. It is because the gentlemen themselves occupy a prominent position before the public, and much faith has, in consequence, been attached to their statements. It is because the Committee has held them up to general admiration. If Mr. Osborne's evidence has been more particularly selected for comment, it is because he has been the loudest in denouncing others and belauding himself, and equally indiscriminating in his abuse and in his praise. It is because he has been the most active in professing a perfect acquaintance with the hospitals, and the most instrumental in misleading the public. Lastly, it is because he has dealt largely in generalities, which it is in most cases impossible to meet, except by equally idle generalities. *Dolus latet in generalibus*, is a very old piece of forensic wisdom; and the only way of determining what degree of faith general allegations deserve, is to

* 5th Rep., p. 36.

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examine the specific statements which are made by the same person. In his letters to the *Times*, and in his pamphlet, as well as in his evidence before the Committee, Mr. Osborne has indulged in general assertions and sweeping accusations, which imperatively demanded proof, retractation, or contempt. When a gentleman comes forward, and, with all the weight of his position as a clergyman and as an eye witness, deliberately asserts that "these vast hospitals were absolutely without the commonest provision for the exigencies they had to meet,"* that "there was an absence of the commonest preparation to carry out the very first and simplest demands in a place set apart to receive the sick and wounded of a large army,"† that "the medical men had not at their disposal the commonest drugs for the treatment of diarrhœa,"‡ and that "a very large proportion of the so-called sick" who arrived from the camp "were men who had been starved"§—when he holds up to public execration "the late Commander-in-Chief, whose apathy," he asserts, "seems to have blinded him to the horrible and heart-rending" records of the camp and Scutari;‖—and when he denounces "the officials at home and abroad, whose blundering carelessness worked such horrors"¶—he must not be surprised if his pretensions to accuracy are closely scrutinized, and the precise degree of credit to which his testimony is entitled is examined

* Scutari and its Hospitals, 3. † Id. 4. ‡ Id. 13.
§ Id. 35. ‖ Id. vi. ¶ Id.

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and exposed. He "sought the truth," he tells us, "and took his own way to arrive at it."* Be it so. The public can now determine the value of his method, by the success which has attended it.

But while justice and truth require that the task of rigorously sifting such statements as have been above exposed, should not be declined, justice and truth equally require that the witnesses should be treated with more charity than they have shewn to others, and that their character should be protected from harsh and disparaging imputations. To ascribe mis-statements to malice is the common way of the world, and if retaliation were justice, a gentleman who did not scruple to declare his belief, that "many thousands of his fellow-crea-"tures lost their lives through the apathy, igno-"rance, folly, and misconduct of the parties im-"mediately entrusted with the details of the war,"† might perhaps be fairly left to receive his reward from that excellent public which is always so ready to trace all actions to the worst motives. But this would be ungenerous. No, Mr. Osborne; erroneous and misleading statements are not more necessarily the offspring of deceitfulness, than misfortunes are necessarily the result of misconduct.

The sources of error in testimony spring more commonly from the imperfection of human nature than from the corruption of the human heart. Those

* Scutari and its Hospitals, v.

† Id. Pref. p. vi.

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who have reflected how largely inference enters into what appear to be the purest cases of mere observation, are not surprised when they hear witnesses of respectable character, give conflicting evidence on a transaction which took place in their presence. When this is the case in the ordinary events of every-day life, how much more likely is it to be so, when a multitude of circumstances and motives concur in exciting the feelings and warping the judgment. Preconceived impressions, also, become so unconsciously mixed up in the mind of even the most scrupulous, that it is no easy matter to separate them from the testimony of the senses. But the errors of the witnesses in question are not wholly to be thus explained. Hasty generalisations and false deductions from particular facts were probably the defects of which the most abundant proofs have been given in the course of their evidence. Thus, from the want of *confectio opii*, one evening, in one of the surgeries, a want of "the commonest drugs at one time" in the hospitals is inferred and published. From the mistaken belief that Miss Nightingale had advertised for lint, the neglect to supply the hospitals with that article is imputed to the authorities, and proclaimed to the world. From the insufficient washing arises the statement that none was done for weeks. The dilapidated condition of a few wards grows into the total wreck of twenty or thirty times their number.

The wish, again, is so often the father of the

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thought, that facts which appear to lead to the desired conclusion, are often imperfectly noticed and wholly misapprehended. While gossip, which tells one way, is eagerly accepted as gospel, facts, which tell the other way, pass unnoticed; and detected falsehoods are reluctantly rejected when they are pleasing. Where a disposition to censure predominates, the glance rapidly seizes and magnifies what is evil, and overlooks what is good. The converse is equally true, especially where the desire to find what is good springs from a wish to blacken by the force of contrast the corresponding evil. Hence the perfect condition in which Mr. Osborne and his friends found the French establishment at Pera.

Then, the little impulses of personal vanity must be taken into account. No man dislikes to be made a hero. Even the most modest and retiring traveller hardly cares to under-colour the scenes which he has witnessed, or to under-rate the perils which he has encountered; and it was not to be expected that gentlemen, fond of popularity, would depreciate the value of their services, by understating the evils which they had discovered. Parochial ovations and provincial fame would not have been won if the hospitals of Scutari had been in apple-pie order; and could such sweet rewards be foregone? Who can wonder that proffered Commissionerships were declined, and that the means of arriving at facts were rejected, when their acceptance might have involved the loss of a shortlived triumph?

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Will not these various sources of error account for much of that evidence which has been above exposed? In justice to Mr. Macdonald, it is but right to observe that his testimony does not appear to have been vitiated by the last mentioned weakness. That he was not proof against the confident assertions of others, indeed, or against the rash conclusions of his own reason, is evident enough from the whole course of his examination; as when, for instance, he assured the Committee that no records of the number of patients in hospital were kept at Scutari,* and that port wine was repeatedly wanting there. But the comparative moderation of his tone shews that he did not strain for effect.

As for Mr. Stafford and Mr. Osborne, they are unquestionably gentlemen of the greatest respectability, and while their statements may be confuted without questioning their respect for the truth, it must be said that they have not shewn themselves superior to the infirmities which beset ordinary human nature. "Doth any man doubt," Lord Bacon has well asked, "that if there were taken out of "men's minds vain opinions, flattering hopes, false "valuations, imaginations as one would, and the like, "but it would leave the minds of a number of men, "poor shrunken things, full of melancholy and in-

* 6015, 6026. This statement is disproved by the returns under the hand of the principal medical officer, of the patients daily admitted and discharged in September, October, and November, which are printed by the Hospital Commission. See their Report, 255-6.

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"disposition, and unpleasing to themselves?" How striking, in this respect, is the contrast between them and that noble woman who figures in the same scenes. How grandly does her glorious form, calm and unswayed by aught but the love of truth, tower over the puny crowd in which the Committee has not been ashamed to confound her. Alas, for senators and priests! the contrast is not very flattering to them. But, if bearded men cannot so control their feelings as to preserve the even balance of their mind,—if they will jump at conclusions without examining facts—if they will take statements on hearsay, and adopt them as their own—if they will let the appetite for applause hurry them into believing what never happened, and fancying what never existed—if, in a word, while professing to search for truth, they suffer themselves to be misled by their own dispositions or by the arts of others, they must be content to cut a very sorry figure by the side of one, whose heart is too pure to yield to the low influences which prevail over baser clay, and whose intellect is too clear to be clouded by the emotions which disturb natures less great.

What, it will be asked, is the world to believe that the hospitals at Scutari were models of comfort, regularity, and system? By no means. They had faults enough in all conscience, but these were of a different character from those imputed to them. There were doctors enough, orderlies enough, medi-

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cines and surgical appliances enough, medical comforts enough, and food enough. The component parts of the machine, with the exceptions above mentioned of hospital furniture and the means of washing, were all there; and it worked some how, but it worked roughly. How could it be otherwise? Unlike the French who have, in their own country, in time of peace, between forty and fifty large general hospitals, in which they accumulate all their ailing soldiers, we were almost wholly without experience in the organisation and management of such institutions; for in our service the score or two of soldiers who need medical aid in each regiment are treated by the surgeon of the corps or his assistant, and attended by a sergeant and a few comrades from the ranks. It is very easy for persons who wish to bring themselves into notice, to go about condemning, in the loudest tone, the faults of their less gifted neighbours, for the purpose of bringing into agreeable relief their own superior qualities; but chattering and acting are very distinct things, and every man of good sense and honesty, must be sensible that, in our inexperience in the administration of large hospitals, it was impossible to expect that a colossal institution for the care of some 3000 or 4000 men, should attain perfection as soon as it sprang into existence. Even the highest order of administrative talent could not have formed, at a moment's notice, a well conducted hospital on so large a scale. But unfortunately that talent was

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not found at Scutari. Dr. Menzies, who was made so much the object of popular indignation, was in truth, as Mr. Sidney Herbert well described him, "a "medical man of very considerable skill as a sur- "geon, and very zealous and attentive to his duty, "but he had not the gift of organization."* At the head of a regimental hospital, he would have earned the professional distinction to which he is justly entitled. But in an evil hour it fell to his lot to organise and regulate a large society, and he was not fitted either by the natural bent of his genius, by temper, or by education for the task. As ship load after ship load of sick and wounded men floated down the Bosphorus, and cast anchor opposite to the vast establishments under his care, his burthen increased, and his powers of supporting it diminished. The quiet easy-tempered man who might have managed a hundred patients with credit to himself, broke down when twenty or thirty times that number were thrown upon his hands; and after an ineffectual struggle for three short but terrible months, his health gave way, and he abandoned the reins to a firmer grasp.

The hospitals of the British Army were certainly not creditable to our service, but they were not what they were represented to be. They were rough military establishments, with soldier-doctors, soldier-orderlies, and soldier-patients, and they had the ill-luck of being visited and abused by a few civilians,

* 19890.

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who knew nothing of hospitals but what they had seen in this great metropolis, where all the resources and appliances of civilization are at hand, and who could make no allowances for deficiencies which did not exist at home, or for those which were incidental to warfare. But are we to blame the Government for the invented evils of the place—to blame them even for the real defects which existed there? Then, let every Government that has ever swayed the destinies of the Empire share the blame. Let the nation share it also. If the Duke of Newcastle, or Mr. Sidney Herbert, or Dr. Andrew Smith are liable to censure, because shirts were not washed, and dinners were badly cooked at Scutari, Mr. Roebuck and Mr. Layard, and every Member of Parliament and every elector in the three kingdoms are equally censurable; for the causes of the evils which have been exaggerated and denounced, are to be found in the nature and constitution of our military service, and in the duties which it is called upon to perform. Scattered over the four quarters of the world in isolated and weak regiments of a few hundred men, the army has never been afforded, in time of peace, the opportunity of forming and improving an hospital system; and if the Committee has ascertained that invention and perfection can go hand in hand, it may be congratulated upon having made the most remarkable discovery of our age. Let our army be increased four-fold. Establish divisions where battalions are now quartered; and general military

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hospitals will spring up which shall far excel the ideal which Messrs. Osborne and Co., have formed of French hospitals. Till then, editors of papers may write slashing articles, popularity hunting M.P.'s and parsons may blow their own trumpets, and pre-determined Committees may censure, but a good system of hospital organization on a large scale is impossible in the British Service.

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XXVI.

ADMINISTRATIVE REFORM.

The principal charges which were brought against the Government and the Departments have now been noticed; and it is unnecessary to swell the bulk of this pamphlet, or to tax the patience of the reader, by following the Committee into the less important details upon which they entered.

The exaggerated statements which were circulated last winter respecting the condition of our army before Sebastopol, and the scandalous imputations which were recklessly thrown upon some of the best of our statesmen, upon our departments, upon the organisation of the military service, upon the whole of our system of administration, have made an impression both abroad and at home, which the truth can remove but gradually—for truth, alas, makes but slow progress over the road which falsehood has already travelled. The mischief, however, which was done by mere newspaper reports and platform asseverations, is insignificant in comparison with that which has been effected by the thoughtless acceptance, on the part of the Committee, of every idle assertion that was volunteered before it, by credulity, vanity, or malice. Those

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statements have now gone forth to the world, under the sanction of that tribunal. They have been recorded in our Parliamentary *fasti*, and until they shall have been thoroughly sifted and exposed, they will bring upon the nation, as Mr. Gladstone said, "shame at home, and weakness abroad."* Mr. Layard never said so true a word, as when he declared, that "if the enemies of England were to "seek the means of calumniating her, and of showing "how hollow her institutions were, they could not "devise a better mode of doing so than by produc- "ing those three blue books."† But as calumny implies falsehood, it is only necessary to publish the truth, in order that the enemies of England may be deprived of the means of slandering her character and constitution.

The effect of the slanderous statements thus referred to by Mr. Layard, has been felt at home in many ways. Though not altogether believed by the more reflecting portion of the community, they unquestionably met with a too ready, and too general acceptance. Indeed, when the journal which gave them their principal circulation, insisted, day after day, with wearying iteration, that they were the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth—when witness after witness appeared in turn before the Committee, and repeated his bead roll of *on dits*, shaves, and *canards*, and recounted his own feats with

* House of Commons, Jan. 29.

† Speech at Drury-lane Theatre.

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all the exaggeration, and the deeds of others with all the detraction that vanity and malice could suggest —it is not surprising that sensible men should have been staggered, and should have slowly joined the lighter-headed crowd, which is always ready to believe any story that has a dash of spite or scandal in it. From faith in the tales of mismanagement and neglect, to a belief that incapacity, insolence and indifference occupied every post in the State, the transition was easy—necessary, even. If our affairs were neglected, it must be because our officers were worthless, and because our system was worthless. And both officers and system were worthless, because they were the creatures of Routine and Favouritism! Disappointed candidates, unappreciated inventors, and habitual grumblers, were not wanting to join in the profession of this creed; and a few mediocrities, with an eye to business, determined to make political capital of it, and accordingly started the Administrative Reform Association.

Assuming the facts on which they rested their case to be true, and the reasoning sound, let us see what was the remedy which they proposed. "The right man in the right place," it is answered. "The square men in the square holes; the round men in the round holes." The proposition looks fair, and promises much. To how many struggling men does it not appeal;—men who, with active brains, and willing hearts, and ready hands, sit nevertheless in the hopeless obscurity to which want

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of friends, not want of capacity, condemns them. How many a nameless soldier feels that nature intended him to be a great general — how many a humble curate trudges his daily round of ministration, in the full consciousness that he has piety and learning enough for the proudest mitre — how many an unknown lawyer, who wears away his brain in his silent chamber, firmly believes that he has talent and learning enough for political and professional distinction. But fortune has not favoured them. The soldier has no money, the curate no interest, the lawyer no legal connexions. Routine and favouritism cross their path at every step in life. The youngster purchases over his senior's head. The owner of the advowson prefers the sermons of his nephew to those of the late rector's assistant. The younger son of a country gentleman kicks his heels fruitlessly in crowded courts, while the attorney's kinsman strides rapidly to wealth and fame. There are plenty of right men waiting for right places in this country; and when the means shall have been devised, of giving to the most meritorious such employments as the State has to offer, there will be no lack of men ready to support the scheme.

But will the Administrative reformers of the present hour be among them? This is a question which admits of no great doubt. If Mr. Layard is to be taken as the exponent of the movement, there is no difficulty whatever in discovering its mainspring;

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for he disclosed it the other day at Drury Lane. In remonstrating against the thinness of the attendance, "he trusted that when the day of triumph arrived, it would be enjoyed by those who had legitimately won it," * and not, it seems, by the right men in the right places. All that he can promise is, that "if ever he should get into the ship, he hopes he will never forget that there were other who wished to get in as well as himself."† The mask never fits so well but that a peep may be caught at the features concealed under it. For once, Mr. Layard incautiously let the truth escape his lips. His agitation, it is clear, is not for that humble merit which teems everywhere, and which it is so difficult to unearth, but for himself; and his triumph, he tells us plainly, is to be shared by those only who now aid him in achieving it. Down, then, with your subscriptions, good men, if you would possess the only merit which the great leader of the Administrative Reform Association can recognise. Down with the dust, if you would be but the cabin-boy of the ship, when the renowned Layard stands by the helm. Good easy British public!

The transparent *mala fides* of this movement, however, is less unpleasant than the extraordinary recklessness of assertion to which its chief supporters have given a kind of fashion. Perhaps in the whole of the annals of this country, where freedom of

* Speech at Drury Lane Theatre.

† House of Commons, June 18.

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speech has hitherto been generally accompanied with some respect for truth and respect for personal character, it would not be possible to find so much mistatement and aspersion as the House of Commons has heard within its walls during this session. It is painful to believe that the falsehoods which are now o' days rattled in such numbers about our ears are deliberate and systematic. It is difficult to believe that they are not so. But whether the habit of inventing and distorting facts be the result of weakness or of dishonesty, the effect upon the national good name is equally detrimental. The people of England will be regarded as the dupes of deceivers or as themselves a nation utterly regardless of truth. It is time that they looked to this.

If Mr. Layard were sincere, he would be but an enthusiast. It is absurd to believe that men in the possession of high political patronage think only of jobbing it away among their relatives, friends and dependents. In dealing with the inferior offices of the public service the temptation to yield to motives of this kind may prevail, since they are not counter-balanced by any strong considerations of an opposite tendency. But does any man of sense believe that a Minister will employ a fool or a rogue in a task which requires sense and honesty, when the responsibility of a failure must fall upon the patron? Is a statesman made of stuff so different from ordinary mortals, that he

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will deliberately choose incompetent instruments for his work, when excellent ones are at hand—that he will entrust a task requiring tact and judgment to a silly Cavendish, when the services of a long-headed Thompson are at his disposal?

The best answer to all such specious reasoning, it will be said, is to be found in the fact that the public service is crowded with lords and honorables, and the sons, nephews, cousins, and connections of lords and honorables. But what does this prove? That they owe their appointments, not to their qualifications, but to their families? By no means, unless it be shewn that they are not fit for their places. It is quite as probable that they owe them to both the one and the other. Unquestionably bad appointments are sometimes made under the influence of private feelings alone; but would our offices be recruited from different ranks of society as they now are, if the Minister looked for merit alone? This is very doubtful. The upper classes have as good intellects as any other, and they have in addition all the advantages of education, which wealth can command or refinement confer. In a fair and equal race with the sons of humbler parents, the odds ought be in favour of the young sprig of nobility, for his training has been effected in higher style. But, unfortunately for his competitors, his advantages are not limited here.

Is a place to be filled, the Minister finds on his table a hundred and fifty applications for it. Smith,

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Brown, Jones, and Robinson, all in turn enumerate their manifold qualifications, and vouch estimable merchants, exemplary clergymen, eminent lawyers, and distinguished manufacturers, as witnesses of their competency. But the perplexed statesman does not know a mother's son of them from Adam. Smith may be a fool, Brown a knave, Jones an ignoramus, Robinson an impostor. As he opens letter after letter, he alights upon a few lines from young Pelham, or Beauclerk, or Somerset, or Lennox, or Gower. He has known the youngster from childhood, and has watched his early career through Eton and Oxford. He knows that he is a man of honour and talent. Why should he hesitate? He has found a candidate perfectly fit for the office; and he appoints him. Poor Smith, Brown, Jones, and Robinson go to the wall. It is hard lines for the worthy fellows, and if they are fools, they will vow eternal hatred to the statesman who rejected them. If they are sensible men—and our Smiths, Browns, Joneses, and Robinsons are sensible men in the long run—they will feel that the Minister was right in preferring a person with whose good qualities he was acquainted, to those whose deserts, however real, were unfortunately unknown to him. When Mr. Layard's turn comes, their turn will come too—unless, indeed that gentleman should, from sheer flunkeyism, select for his officers, the fortunate possessors of handles to their names, rather than promote the plain Misters whose sterling

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merits he has learned from long acquaintance. When it is considered how, with all this clamour against the appointments made by the late and the present Governments, Royal Dukes are elected to the presidency of City charities, and Noble Lords to the Chair of railway boards—when it is seen how eagerly men of rank and title are besieged, and entreated to shed on public dinners and public meetings the lustre which their countenance is supposed to impart to aggregations of humbler mortals, it would cause no great surprise if lords and honorables should be as rampant in the civil and military services of the country, when its destinies are confided to the keeping of Roebucks, Layards and Lindsays, as they are in these evil times of Newcastles and Panmures, Palmerstons and Aberdeens.

But a device has been imagined for depriving the high-born candidate of this advantage which so frequently ensures him the prize. The merits of all the claimants are to be searched and tested by an examination. An examination in what? In Greek verses, conic sections, or double entry? In languages, in composition, in accomplishments? But when the ordeal has been triumphantly passed, is it clear that the best man will have been discovered? Let it be conceded—and the concession is a very large one—that you have perhaps found the best man in point of positive information, readiness and coolness — do such qualities import a superiority in intellectual capacity, in temper, firm-

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ness, judgment, industry, honour? Is the most accomplished linguist necessarily the best diplomatist? Is the most skilful book-keeper the best administrator? Will a literary or scientific examination disclose the highest qualities for the real business of life? The idea is childish. But why, it is said, not have an examination to detect the moral and mental qualities of the candidates? It will be time enough to consider the expediency of such a course when its feasibility shall have been shewn.

Let it be admitted, however, that all the qualifications which a public servant should possess can be brought to light and weighed by an examination, will the State secure by this means the services of the best talent which the country possesses? This is hardly doubtful. If an examination is to take place at every step in the service, from the office of an ambassador to that of the lowest clerk, is it expected that diplomatists like Lord Stratford de Redcliffe and Mr. Henry Bulwer will enter the lists and struggle for the prize as they did at Oxford before a bench of examiners? If this proposition be considered too preposterous, even by Administrative Reformers, then it is difficult to see to what rank in the public service this principle of selection is to be confined. If it is to be confined to the lowest, and the upper grades may be filled from the ranks of the nation at large, then great pains are taken to ensure effi-

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ciency in the least important places, and the old system is suffered to have its full swing where it may be most mischievous.

But this is not exactly the proposed scheme. The Utopian idea is to admit to the lowest grade by examination, and to promote to all offices of trust and emolument in the State those only who have passed that examination, and worked their way up through the various ranks of the service. And it is thus that the country hopes to secure, for its own work, the best talent which it produces! But do reasonable men seriously believe, that in this enterprising and active nation, the highest rank of intellect will be found willing to begin the world on the humble certainty of £90 a-year and the prospect of gradual promotion, in preference to carving boldly its own fortune in any of the thousand and one pursuits in which men are daily seen rising from obscurity to eminence? If future Palmerstons and Clarendons are to be disqualified from serving the State, unless they consent to serve it first in the grade of the humblest clerk, it is clear that either the nation must be satisfied to have its work done by inferior men, or it must so raise the salaries of our public offices as to attract to them the best men in the country. But if this be done, not only will the expenditure incurred be enormous, it will be to a great extent useless, since it will be necessary, in order to obtain the few first class men who are required for the highest offices, to augment inor-

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dinately the pay of places which would be competently filled by inferior persons at a much lower rate.

But, after all, suppose this done. Suppose all the public offices bursting with superfluous genius, overflowing with an excess of talent, how is promotion among this selected and select body to be regulated? By seniority? "Bah!" exclaims one Administrative Reformer, "that would be "routine, and no man would attain to eminence "until he had grown too old for it, while the State "would often be deprived of the talents of an able "junior, because a dull senior stopped the way." By the selection of the Minister? "Out of the question," shouts another Administrative Reformer, "that "would be a return to favouritism and nepotism." Well, gentlemen, settle it among yourselves. Choose whether you will have the one or the other —but one or other, have you must. You have gone a long way round to avoid the enemies whom you denounce; and, at the end of all your toil and trouble, you find yourselves face to face with them. You will have routine as before and favouritism as before.

In truth, however, the public has been as much misled as to the causes of the evils which they deplored, as they were deceived respecting the nature and gravity of those evils. If all the stories of the last winter were as true as they have proved to be false or distorted, it would be, nevertheless, an error to attribute the mischief described

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to routine. The difficulties of the Commissariat were regarded as, perhaps, the most striking proof of the vice of an inveterate official formalism. Have we yet forgotten with what amusement and indignation the Commissariat ceremonies were canvassed a few months ago? Their absurdity was so preposterous, that the imagination revelled in devising all the disastrous consequences which resulted from their complications. Take the following, for instance, as a specimen of this *jeu d'esprit*: "Men were "sent down," we are told, "from camp to get some-"thing, or, perhaps, many things. They have a "requisition. They present it to some Jack-in-"office, some sergeant doing officer's duty, and, like "so many others, far above his work; the requisition "is irregular—perhaps one signature is wanting; it "may be signed by the Colonel of [the] regiment, by "Assistant-Master, Master-General, Commissary-"General, and a dozen others, but it may lack the "signature of the Assistant-Commissary-General, "or Deputy-Assistant-Quartermaster-General, or "somebody else. The man is brow-beat,"* &c. &c.

This is no bad specimen of the *facts* with which an amateur may return from the trenches, and put into circulation as the evidence of an eye-witness. But what was proved before the Committee? That the forms complained of are as simple as it is possible to make them, consistently with the maintenance of a due check on expenditure, and the prevention

* A Trip to the Trenches, p. 141.

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of malversation. "The form of voucher," says Sir C. Trevelyan, "upon which the supply of bread "to the troops is issued, is the three daily ration "return, a ration return which is prepared once "in three days; and we consider this, as well as "the other forms of the Commissariat, to have been "reduced to the utmost possible degree of simpli- "city. When I took charge of the Commissariat "in 1840, I found the general instructions of the "department in such a state, that it was impossible, "even for the most experienced officer, to under- "stand them; they were contained in an obsolete "book of regulations and several hundred circulars, "the greater part of which have been rescinded. "Pains were then taken to reduce this mass to a "simple code of regulations; and the numerous "forms then in use were much curtailed, and they "were printed, and distinguished by consecutive "numbers, at the end of the book of regulations. "At the same time, the accounts, which, previously "to that time, were rather of a complex nature, and "aimed at making a classification of the different "services, were reduced to the utmost possible de- "gree of simplicity, consisting of the simplest form "of cash-book and store-book, all receipts being "entered on one side and all the issues on the other, "as they occurred; the account to be rendered to "the Commissioners of Audit being merely a tran- "script of this simple account. Some years after- "wards, the book of regulations was again revised,

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"as it now exists, in its present form."* Even the Committee was unable to find in the forms any food for that "regret" which they experienced on so many other subjects of their inquiry. They have contented themselves with reporting that Sir C. Trevelyan stated, "that the forms of the Com-"missariat had been improved and simplified some "years since, and that, although persons might "misunderstand any regulations, yet he did not "believe these forms were to be blamed. He would "willingly submit them to any practised accountant "for his opinion. Deputy-Commissary-General "Smith says that as long as regulations are required "none could be made of a more simple form than "those applicable to the Commissariat; and he "had never heard any complaints arising out of the "observance of those forms."

But if the absurdity of the outcry is manifest in this case, the hypocrisy of it is equally plain in others. Some members of the Committee, who were so eager to catch Routine at fault, were the first to discover inconveniences resulting from any departure from it. Mr. Sidney Herbert's urgent communications to the Purveyor at Scutari were thought very illegitimate and heterodox, because they were not made through the Commandant, according to all precedent and rule.† The Duke of Newcastle's direct correspondence with Lord William Paulet, the Commandant at that place, ap-

* 13538. † 19823—5.

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peared open to a similar objection because it was not transmitted to Lord Raglan in the first instance.*. All sorts of frauds† and forgeries‡ were suggested as the possible consequences of a neglect of forms at the Victualling and Ordnance Boards. Routine the bane of our service, indeed! It appears that it was simplified by the Treasury, and that it was resolutely disregarded in the War-Office. "We met frequently," says Lord Hardinge, "in the Duke of Newcastle's room, sometimes "twice a week, generally once, with the heads "of the Departments; the Duke being exceed-"ingly pressed—the mails going out twice a "week—when the hour arrived or a mail was "coming in, we were obliged to take down in "notes what he decided should be done, and then "to carry it into effect without the loss of a day, "and subsequently to give him a memorandum "for official signature, that it might be recorded "as a fact that his orders had been strictly obeyed."§ If this be routine, then certainly routine is a less stately and more easy-going sort of affair than is generally supposed.

But, it is said, what mischief routine left unaccomplished, was completed by favoritism. To jobbing and nepotism and family influence the interests of the State were sacrificed. And the public could give heed to these brave assertions! Do they still remember the names of the men against whom

* 20836. † 17811, &c. ‡ 20281. § 20647.

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the current of popular feeling ran so strongly, a few months since? Boxer—Filder—Christie—Hall—Sillery—Menzies—Andrew Smith—these are the public servants who were demanded as a sacrifice to that fury which falsehoood and calumny had lashed to the highest pitch. These are the officers who were incurring general resentment because an inattentive sea captain did not know how his cargo was stowed, because some idlers about the camp had come home with stories about horses eating each others' tails, because Balaklava harbour was said to be growing almost as dirty as the Thames, because Mr. Stafford caught diarrhœa at a glance, because Mr. Osborne could see no wine or medicine in our hospitals. But which of the officers above named has owed his position to family or to favoritism? Which of them, on the contrary, has not been the architect of his own fortunes? Admiral Boxer, though a gentleman by birth and education, entered the navy as an able seaman,* and he raised himself to the rank which he held at his death entirely by his own merit.† "Admiral Boxer," says Sir J. Graham, "was first made known to me "in the year 1830, twenty-five years ago, by Sir "Thomas Hardy, who was remarkable for many "things, and for nothing so much as his knowledge "and just appreciation of naval character, and he "represented Captain Boxer to me at that time as "one of the best seamen that he knew; and I re-

* 16999. † 17000.

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" collected this character of Captain Boxer upon " my return to the Admiralty. Captain Boxer, " at Acre, had more than justified the opinion of " Sir Thomas Hardy: he was the officer em- " ployed to mark the stations for the line-of-battle " ships that bombarded Acre, which he did under " a heavy fire; he himself commanded a ship, and " greatly distinguished himself on that occasion; " he then, after that operation, went to the St. " Lawrence, and was harbour-master at Quebec, " and he had more experience in the embarkation " and disembarkation of troops than any other " officer that I know. I looked through the list, " and endeavoured to select the man that I thought " the fittest. No application was ever made to me " in favour of Admiral Boxer, and I selected him, " and very much surprised him by giving him the " appointment."*

Respecting Captain Christie, Sir James Graham told the Committee, that he was appointed on the recommendation of Captain Milne as a fit officer to be entrusted with the supreme power over the transports. " Captain Christie," observed Sir James, " was only known to me by his naval repu- " tation; he had been a lieutenant in the 'Tartar' " frigate, under Sir George Collier, when Commo- " dore on the coast of Africa. I had the greatest " possible respect for the memory of Sir George " Collier; I considered him an admirable officer,

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" and I knew that Captain Christie was a lieutenant " for whom he had the greatest regard; he was " altogether unknown to me except from that naval " reputation, and on the recommendation of Captain " Milne I appointed him."*

Dr. A. Smith, who was, the other day, held up in Parliament, by Sir John Trollope, as the creature of favoritism, began life some 38 years ago as an humble assistant-surgeon; he served for years in almost every quarter of the globe, and rose slowly through every grade of his profession, until he was at last selected for the office of Director-General by the Duke of Wellington.

The other gentlemen above named are happily still alive, and without dragging their private histories before the world, it must suffice to state that, one and all, they began life without family interest, without powerful patrons, without aristocratic connexion.

* 21063.

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XXVII.

CONCLUSION.

Notwithstanding the solid good sense and moderation which generally mark the national character, it cannot be denied that too great a readiness has been shewn to receive accusations against every person in the employment of the State. No fable has been too absurd for general belief; no imputation too gross for general sanction. People appear to have been at one time led to the conviction that every public man in the country was a villain or an idiot. If Odessa was not bombarded, treason had held our hand. If the Straits of Kertch were not forced, cowardice or stupidity were the sole reasons of our inaction. If Sebastopol was not stormed, want of vigour on the part of the Administration, or want of nerve on the part of the General, had lost us the golden opportunity which has not since returned. Every step in the war was dogged by the confident criticisms of "our own correspondents" or better still of "ourselves;" and the men who had upon their hands the heavy burthen of conducting the Government of the country at home, and the war abroad, were suspected, misunderstood and traduced. Is this fair? Is it rational? Does the sensible people of England then really think that while talent and industry and honour abound in all ranks of

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society, the machinery of our Government is so defective, that nothing but folly, indolence and treachery can rise to eminence in the State? Do they think that their representatives systematically confer their confidence on those of their fellow members who are the least worthy of it? Do they believe that their affairs are tossed like a shuttle-cock, from one set of incapables to another, while all the patriotism and genius which are amassed in the Lower House stand helplessly by, and look on the game? Then they are themselves much to blame, for the remedy is in their own hands. They should send to Parliament men who will not lend their sanction to such proceedings.

This has perhaps not been as generally the state of the public mind as some of our papers and orators would have us believe. But it has nevertheless been too generally so. It is time, however, that those who have been so thoughtless should recover their ordinary equanimity and judgment. Common sense, if not justice, should lead them to remember that the men who administer the affairs of the State are, at all events, Englishmen as well as themselves, and that they probably have, at least, an average amount of talent, industry, zeal, and patriotism. They should remember that in our popular form of Government, public men are peculiarly exposed to slander and abuse, and they ought, therefore, to be habitually slow in giving heed to such statements.

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Are we not, then, to believe what we are told in society, or read in print? it will be asked. Not always. It is no easy matter to discover the truth. The greatest of difficulties is to arrive at facts. Newspaper correspondents, however shrewd, frequently do not possess the means of arriving at the truth. They are often at the mercy of informants, and those informants, as well as themselves, are but too prone to confound conjectures, opinions, and expectations, with facts. Besides, "a mixture of a lie," Lord Bacon tells us, "doth ever add pleasure." Great mistakes are made in consequence. Erroneous statements are circulated. They are but too often adopted without examination, and judgment is pronounced upon them without hesitation. Even though the sentence involve the overthrow of an Administration, no time is taken for reflection. There are but too many persons in the country who know not what it is to doubt a newspaper paragraph, and who regard with more respect the veracity of an anonymous writer, than the character or the fate of a Minister. This is not common sense. It is not business-like. It is, however, the evil of the day. It is the bad point against which all must guard. Men should be slow of belief, when statements come to us from thousands of miles, unauthenticated, and incapable of immediate verification. It may be difficult for some minds to hesitate in giving credit to deliberate assertions—especially when made in the face of the world; but

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if the people of this country choose to accept devoutly, and instantly, every statement purporting to be made by an eye-witness, every story of which the narrator is the hero, and every calumny which is uttered or printed, they will be constantly deceived, and will acquire no enviable reputation for common sense.

Indeed, the conduct, not only of the nation, but of Parliament, has not tended to exalt, in Europe, our character for that shrewdness and moderation which we claim as peculiarly our own. The exaggerated reports respecting the condition of our army created abroad an impression that our military power was contemptible. "Arrived here," writes a Sardinian from Balaklava, "we expected to find "the English army almost inferior to the Turks. "Imagine how we were astonished at seeing a "magnificent army, well provided with everything, "full of enthusiasm, and well disciplined."* The false accounts of the state of our hospitals laid us open to the imputation of being destitute of talent for administration. The outcry about salt meat, green coffee, the want of porter, and such matters, exposed us to the suspicion that we are but little fitted for the hardships, much less for the horrors, which attend in the train of war. The readiness with which the House of Commons granted a Committee to verify newspaper reports, did not raise the opinion, entertained abroad, of Constitutional insti-

* *Times*, June 30.

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tutions, for it showed that one branch of the Legislature, at least, was not superior to the popular excitement of the moment.

It is not surprising, under these circumstances, that anxious doubts have been felt by the most reflecting men in the community, whether our form of government, with the large accession which the liberty of speech and action has received during the last forty years, will work as successfully in a time of war, as it has unquestionably worked in peace. This question has been so clearly and strikingly laid before the nation by a man who proves that a Prince may be also a philosophical statesman, that his words are well deserving of meditation at the present time. "If there ever was a time," Prince Albert lately said to the Trinity Brethren, "at which her "Majesty's Government, by whomsoever con- "ducted, required the support—aye, not the sup- "port alone, but the confidence, good-will, and "sympathy of their fellow-countrymen, it is surely "the present. It is not the way to success in war, "to support it, however ardently and enthusias- "tically, but at the same time to run down and "weaken the hands of those who have to conduct "it. We are engaged with a mighty enemy, who "is using against us all those wonderful powers "which have sprung up under the generating in- "fluence of our liberty and our civilization. You "find him with all that force which unity of pur-

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"pose and action, impenetrable secrecy, and un-
"controlled despotic power have given; while we
"have to meet him under a state of things intended
"for peace, and for the promotion of that very
"civilization, the offspring of public discussion,
"of the friction of parties, and of the popular
"control of the Government and the State.
"The Queen has no power to levy troops, nor
"has she any at her command, but such as
"offer their voluntary services. Her Govern-
"ment can take no measures for the prosecution
"of the war, which it has not, before-hand, to ex-
"plain to Parliament. Her armies and fleets can
"make no movements, or even prepare for any,
"without their being publicly announced in the
"papers. No mistake, however trifling, can
"occur—no want or weakness exist, which is not
"at once denounced, and even sometimes exag-
"gerated, with a kind of morbid satisfaction.
"The Queen's Ambassadors can enter into no
"negotiations without the Government having to
"defend them, by entering into all the arguments
"which a negociator, to be successful, ought to be
"able to shut up in the innermost recesses of his
"heart. Nay, at the most critical moment, when
"the complications of military operations and of
"diplomatic negotiations may be at their height, an
"adverse vote in Parliament may, at a moment,
"deprive the Queen of the whole of her confiden-
"tial servants. Gentlemen, our constitutional

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" government is undergoing a heavy trial, and we " shall not get successfully through it, unless the " country will grant its confidence—a patriotic, " indulgent, and self-denying confidence—to her " Majesty's Government."

These words deserve attention, not because they have fallen from the husband of the Queen, nor merely because they have been pronounced by a man of sense and mind. They deserve attention because the mischiefs which they point out are of frequent occurrence. But they are not the only inconveniences which we have to fear. The history of the last two sessions would seem to teach that the action of a constitutional legislature is impaired, if not paralysed as soon as a war breaks out. Since the beginning of hostilities, almost every useful reform of our laws and our institutions has been arrested. The Reform Bill was strangled at its birth. That gigantic nuisance —the Corporation of London—has been left untouched. The police of one-half of the kingdom is still confided to the primitive parish constable. Church-rates are still a bone of dissension. The disabilities of the Jews have not been removed. The Augean stable of Doctors' Commons has triumphed over every attempt to purify it. The subject of National Education is adjourned. The Licensing system still flourishes with all its vexations and absurdities. The decimal coinage has been post-

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poned. Even the limited liability bill, a subject of perhaps as much consequence to the commerce of this country as free trade itself, is not yet quite safe.

And why have so many important measures been thrown overboard? Because our legislators have been too much engaged in watching how other persons were discharging their duties, to give more than a divided attention to their own;—because they have preferred criticising the conduct of their neighbours, to attending to their own business;—because they have chosen to devote night after night, to the alternate reception and demolition of personal accusations. But surely the Legislature might be more usefully employed. If it be necessary that every false assertion should be disproved, let a Committee be appointed for the purpose. Let the House establish, *en permanence*, a body of a dozen gentlemen, to be called the Committee of Slanders, or the Committee of Lies, and refer to it every statement which they deem worth sifting. But if it seriously desires to discharge its own duties, it will no longer suffer the public time to be wasted in the refutation of every cock-and-bull story, that folly or malice chooses to rake up and disseminate; for the task of refutation is now superfluous.

But the worst characteristic of the present day is an eagerness to censure every body and every

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thing, and a recklessness in scattering the censure broad-cast. Not only have the men who were serving their country in a distant land to the best of their ability, been held up to execration, but they have, equally with our officials at home, been blamed for the faults of others. Not only has contumely been heaped on the Ambassador at Constantinople because he did not discharge the functions of Commandant at Scutari, and on the transport agent at Balaklava for the alleged neglect of the harbour-master's duties, but the faults, real and imaginary, of every person, high and low, from the head of a department to the humblest clerk, have been indiscriminately visited on the Duke of Newcastle. Indifference, incapacity, paralysis—these were the imputations which were showered upon him, every time some petty negligence at Scutari, or misfortune at Balaklava, was reported. Nay, he had to endure the last outrage that can wring the heart of an honourable man. Some vicious scribe did not scruple to charge him with meanness.

Because the road to the camp was impassable, he was stigmatised as incapable. Because some *employé* at Scutari neglected his duty, the Minister for War was indifferent to the sufferings of our fellow-countrymen. "I cannot but feel," he observed, as he gallantly faced accusations so ruinous to the character of a statesman, "that that charge "of incapacity is, with the public, a favourite expla-

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" nation of every political misfortune."* The slandered Minister spoke but too truly. It is to be hoped, however, for the sake of the character of the nation, far more than for that of the Duke of Newcastle, that the public will, in their calmer moments, revoke their hasty judgment; and that before finally condemning a statesman who has served the country long and well, they will review dispassionately the history of the first year of the war, and impartially trace his conduct throughout it all. Did the plan, let them candidly ask themselves, of striking a blow at the seat of Russian power in the East before the defences of the place could be strengthened, betray irresolution, timidity, or procrastination; or did its details shew a want of sagacity or information? Was the equipment of the army with artillery, small arms and ammunition, or were the means adopted for increasing its numbers, proof that he was unequal to the task of conducting the great war which the country had undertaken? Were the steps which he took to supply our men with medical attendance, provisions, clothing, shelter, the means of transport, evidence of indolence or indifference? What! a Minister, who in the space of a few brief weeks, provided an ample medical and commissariat staff—who, in a few short months, created an ambulance corps, a transport corps, a police corps, and a hospital corps for the service of the army;—who

* Speech in House of Lords, p. 25.

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transported, some 3000 miles across the seas, huts, clothing, and comforts of every kind to within six miles of its camp, until the shore was actually "incumbered" with the goods—who exhausted every means to give the men wholesome and abundant food—who even supplied them with a railway to facilitate their communication with their base of operations, and with a telegraph to transmit in a few hours the accounts of their triumphs and the statements of their wants—is such a Minister to be pronounced incompetent?

He did not succeed in his main design it is true. He did not succeed, also, in averting those ills over which he told his fellow-peers he passed many a sleepless night. But is the people of this country content to judge men by that fool's test of merit—success? No; the true question is not whether he won success, but whether he deserved it—whether he did all that human foresight and sagacity could suggest, or human energy could execute. If Sebastopol has not fallen, let us honour the enemy who has gallantly resisted the invader of his fatherland, but let us not blame the English statesman who did all that the means at his disposal enabled him to do, and all that, under ordinary circumstances, it would have been necessary to do, for the purpose of triumphing over that resistance. If the winds of heaven destroyed our ships and scattered our stores, impute not the

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consequences to a Minister of State, If from neglect or inevitable misfortune, the road to the camp was broken up—if from culpable indolence or unforeseen accident at Balaklava or Constantinople, a proper supply of medicines was not sent from the stores in Turkey to the camp in the Crimea —if from blundering or incapacity at Scutari, the hospitals on the Bosphorus were not properly managed, or the hospital ships properly equipped – if from the stupidity or inattention of the captains of merchant vessels, stores destined for the army were not duly delivered—visit not these sins of omission or commission upon a man who discharged well his own duties, and did all that human power could do to make those under him do theirs.

Put the saddle on the right horse. Let not a Minister be hounded and defamed because some humble clerk, some obscure dispenser, some petty official neglects his duty, and misconducts himself. Let each man bear his own burthen. If the nation will honestly consent to do this, the Duke of Newcastle will be restored to that rank in the public confidence which was the just reward of his talents and industry, and which was thoughtlessly torn from him at the suggestion of calumny and falsehood. Instead of heaping the sins of the people on his devoted head, let us rather put on sackcloth and ashes, and penitently admit that we are more to blame than he; for much of the mischief which

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has happened, is due to that parsimony which reduced our military services to the lowest ebb, and against the evil consequences of which he had incessantly to struggle. But whether we take upon ourselves our own share of the blame or not, let us, at all events, have no Ostracism. Neither the word nor the thing is English. It is the worst vice of a Republic; and it would not only disgrace our national character, but bring decay and death into our free and noble constitution.

THE END.

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